BELL'S EDITION.

The POETS of GREAT BRITAIN COMPLETE FROM CHAUCER to CHURCHILL.

MILTON VOLUME III.

but here I feel amends
The breath of Heav'n fresh blowing.

Samson Agon: line 9.

d for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London Nov.r 20th. 1777.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

FROM THE TEXT OF DR. NEWTON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

AND A CRITIQUE ON PARADISE LOST,

BY JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

Three poets, in three diſtant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn.
The firſt in loftineſs of thought ſurpaſt;
The next in majeſty; in both the laſt.
The force of Nature could no further go:
To make a third ſhe join'd the former two.

DRYDEN.

VOL. III.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1779.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

VOL. III.

CONTAINING

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

A POEM IN FOUR BOOKS.

TOGETHER WITH

SAMSON AGONISTES, COMUS, L'ALLEGRO, IL PENSEROSO, ARCADES, LYCIDAS.

Milton----with high and haughty ftalks,
Unfetter'd, in majeftic numbers walks:
No vulgar hero can his Mufe engage,
Nor earth's wide fcene confine his hallow'd rage.
See! fee! he upward fprings, and, tow'ring high,
Spurns the dull province of mortality;
Shakes Heav'n's eternal throne with dire alarms,
And fets th' almighty Thunderer in arms!

A

PREFACE.

[Extracted from Dr. Newton's Octavo Edition of 1773.]

IT hath been recommended to me by some great persons, as well as by several friends, to complete the edition of Milton's Poetical Works: for though the Paradise Lost be the flower of epic poesy, and the noblest effort of genius, yet here are other poems which are no less excellent in their kind, and if they have not that sublimity and majesty, are at least equally beautiful and pleasing to the imagination. And the same method that was taken in the publication of the Paradise Lost, is pursued in this edition of the Paradise Regain'd and other Poems, to exhibit the true and genuine text according to Milton's own editions. Of the Paradise Regain'd and Samson Agonistes there was only one edition in Milton's life-time, in the year 1671; *and this we have made our standard, correcting only what the Author himself would have corrected. Dr. Bentley pronounces it to be without faults, but there is large table of errata at the end, which instead of be emended, have rather been augmented in the follo editions, and were never corrected in any editio have seen before the present. Of the other P were two edi*

and several other poems there are extant copies in Milton's own hand writing, preserved in the library of Trinity College in Cambridge: and all these copies and editions have been carefully collated and compared together. The Manuscript, indeed, hath been of singular service in rectifying several passages, and especially in the Sonnets, some of which were not printed till many years after Milton's death, and were then printed imperfect and deficient both in sense and metre, but are now, by the help of the Manuscript, restored to their just harmony and original perfection.

The Latin poems I cannot say are equal to several of his English compositions: but yet they are not without their merit; they are not a cento, like most of the modern Latin poetry; there is spirit, invention, and other marks and tokens of a rising genius; for it should be considered, that the greater part of them were written while the Author was under twenty. They are printed correctly, according to his own editions in 1645 and 1673.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK I.

I who ere while the happy Garden ſung,
By one man's diſobedience loſt, now ſing
Recover'd Paradiſe to all mankind,
By one Man's firm obedience fully try'd
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waſte wilderneſs.
  Thou Spi'rit who ledſt this glorious eremite
Into the deſert, his victorious field,
Againſt the ſpiritual foe, and brought'ſt him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inſpire,
As thou art wont, my prompted ſong elſe mute,
And bear through highth or depth of Nature's bound
With proſp'rous wing full ſumm'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in ſecret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age,
Worthy to' have not remain'd ſo long unſung.
  Now had the great Proclamer, with a voice
More aweful than the ſound of trumpet, cry'd
Repentance, and Heav'n's kingdom nigh at ha
[illegible]

Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptiſt ſoon
Deſcry'd, divinely warn'd, and witneſs bore
As to his worthier, and would have reſign'd
To him his heav'nly office, nor was long
His witneſs unconfirm'd: on him baptis'd
Heav'n open'd, and in likeneſs of a dove
The Spi'rit deſcended, while the Father's voice
From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
That heard the Adverſary, who roving ſtill
About the world, at that aſſembly fam'd
Would not be laſt, and with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-ſtruck, th' exalted Man, to whom
Such high atteſt was giv'n, a while ſurvey'd
With wonder, then with envy fraught and rage
ies to his place, nor reſts, but in mid air
council ſummons all his mighty peers,
Vithin thick clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
gloomy conſiſtory; and them amidſt
ith looks aghaſt and ſad he thus beſpake.
O ancient Pow'rs of Air and this wide world,
much more willingly I mention Air,
s our old conqueſt, than remember Hell,
hated habitation; well ye know
many ages, as the years of men,

With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the Seed of Eve
Upon my head: long the decrees of Heav'n
Delay, for longeſt time to him is ſhort;
And now too ſoon for us the circling hours
This dreaded time have compaſs'd, wherein we
Muſt bide the ſtroke of that long threaten'd wound,
At leaſt if ſo we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of Earth and Air;
For this ill news I bring, the Woman's Seed
Deſtin'd to this, is late of woman born:
His birth to our juſt fear gave no ſmall cauſe,
But his growth now to youth's full flower, diſplaying
All virtue, grace, and wiſdom to achieve
Things higheſt, greateſt, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great prophet, to proclame
His coming, is ſent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the conſecrated ſtream
Pretends to waſh off ſin, and fit them ſo
urified to receive him pure, or rather
o do him honor as their king; all come,
And he himſelf among them was bap

Out of the water, Heav'n above the clouds
Unfold her cryſtal doors, thence on his head
A perfect dove deſcend, whate'er it meant,
And out of Heav'n the Sov'ran voice I heard,
This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heav'n,
And what will he not do to' advance his Son?
His firſt-begot we know, and ſore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the Deep;
Who this is we muſt learn, for man he ſeems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpſes of his Father's glory ſhine.
Ye ſee our danger on the utmoſt edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But muſt with ſomething ſudden be oppos'd,
Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well woven ſnares,
Ere in the head of nations he appear
Their king, their leader, and ſupreme on Earth.
I, when no other durſt, ſole undertook
he diſmal expedition to find out
nd ruin Adam, and th' exploit perform'd
ccesſfully; a calmer voyage now
nd the way found proſp'rous once

ſad tidings; but no time was then
indulgence to their fears or grief:
ous they all commit the care
nagement of this main enterprize
their great dictator, whoſe attempt
gainſt mankind ſo well had thriv'd
n's overthrow, and led their march
ell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
and potentates, and kings, yea gods
y a pleaſant realm and province wide.
e coaſt of Jordan he directs
ſteps, girded with ſnaky wiles,
he might likelieſt find this new-declar'd,
an of men, atteſted Son of God,
tion and all guile on him to try;
bvert whom he ſuſpected rais'd
his reign on Earth ſo long enjoy'd:
trary unweeting he fulfill'd
rpos'd counſel pre-ordain'd and fix'd
Moſt High, who in full frequence bright
els, thus to Gabriel ſmiling ſpake.
iel, this day by proof thou ſhalt behold,
nd all angels converſant on Earth
nan or men's affairs, how I begin
ify that ſolemn meſſage late,
ich I ſent thee to the Virgin pure
lee, that ſhe ſhould bear a ſon
n renown, and call'd the Son of God;

Then toldſt her doubting how theſe things c
To her a virgin, that on her ſhould come
The Holy Ghoſt, and the power of the High
O'er-ſhadow' her: this Man born and now up
To ſhow him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expoſe
To Satan; let him tempt and now aſſay
His utmoſt ſubtlety, becauſe he boaſts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the thron
Of his apoſtaſy; he might have learnt
Leſs overweening ſince he fail'd in Job,
Whoſe conſtant perſeverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now ſhall know I can produce a Man
Of female ſeed, far abler to reſiſt
All his ſolicitations, and at length
All his vaſt force, and drive him back to Hell
Winning by conqueſt what the firſt man loſt
By fallacy ſurpris'd. But firſt I mean
To exerciſe him in the wilderneſs,
There he ſhall firſt lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I ſend him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foe
By humiliation and ſtrong ſufferance:
His weakneſs ſhall o'ercome Satanic ſtrength,
And all the world, and maſs of ſinful fleſh;
That all the angels and ethereal powers,
They now, and men hereafter may diſcern,

From what conſummate virtue I have choſe
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn ſalvation for the ſons of men.
So ſpake th' eternal Father, and all Heav'n
Admiring ſtood a ſpace, then into hymns
Burſt forth, and in celeſtial meaſures mov'd,
Circling the throne and ſinging, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument.
Victory and triumph to the Son of God
Now entring his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquiſh by wiſdom helliſh wiles.
The Father knows the Son; therefore ſecure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untry'd,
Againſt whate'er may tempt, whate'er ſeduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be fruſtrate all ye ſtratagems of Hell,
And deviliſh machinations come to nought.
So they in Heav'n their odes and vigils tun'd:
Mean while the Son of God, who yet ſome days
Lodg'd in Bethabara where John baptiz'd,
Muſing and much revolving in his breaſt,
How beſt the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way firſt
Publiſh his Godlike office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,
And his deep thoughts, the better to converſe
With Solitude, till far from track of men;
Thought following thought, and ſtep by ſtep led on,

He enter'd now the bord'ring desert wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursu'd.
O what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all; yet this not all
To which my spi'rit aspir'd; victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
Then to subdue and quell o'er all the Earth
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:

Yet held it more humane, more heav'nly first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make Persuasion do the work of Fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul
Not wilfully mis-doing, but unware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving
By words at times cast forth inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart, High are thy thoughts
O Son, but nourish them and let them soar
To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy Father is th' eternal King who rules
All Heav'n and Earth, angels and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a virgin, he foretold
Thou should'st be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity a glorious quire
Of angels in the fields of Bethlehem sung
To shepherds watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room:

A star, not seen before, in Heav'n appearing
Guided the Wise Men thither from the East,
To honor thee with incense, myrrh, and gold,
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star new grav'n in Heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn'd
By vision, found thee in the temple', and spake
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood.
This having heard, strait I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay ev'n to the death,
Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited, when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah and his way prepare.
I as all others to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he
Strait knew me, and with loudest voice proclam'd
Me him (for it was shown him so from Heaven)

Me him whoſe harbinger he was; and firſt
Refus'd on me his baptiſm to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But as I roſe out of the laving ſtream,
Heav'n open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spi'rit deſcended on me like a dove,
And laſt the ſum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more ſhould live obſcure,
But openly begin, as beſt becomes
Th' authority which I deriv'd from Heav'n.
And now by ſome ſtrong motion I am led
Into this wilderneſs, to what intent
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
So ſpake our Morning Star then in his riſe,
And looking round on every ſide beheld
A pathleſs deſert, duſk with horrid ſhades;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human ſteps untrod;
And he ſtill on was led, but with ſuch thoughts
Accompanied of things paſt and to come
Lodg'd in his breaſt, as well might recommend
Such ſolitude before choiceſt ſociety.
Full forty days he paſs'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in ſhady vale, each night

Under the covert of ſome ancient oak,
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor taſted human food, nor hunger felt
'Till thoſe days ended, hunger'd then at laſt
Among wild beaſts: they at his ſight grew mild,
Nor ſleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk
The fiery ſerpent fled, and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as ſeem'd, the queſt of ſome ſtray ewe,
Or wither'd ſticks to gather, which might ſerve
Againſt a winter's day when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
He ſaw approach, who firſt with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd ſpake.
  Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who paſs
In troop or caravan? for ſingle none
Durſt ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His carcaſs, pin'd with hunger and with drouth.
I aſk the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou ſeem'ſt the Man whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honor'd ſo, and call'd thee Son
Of God; I ſaw and heard, for we ſometimes
Who dwell this wild, conſtrain'd by want, come forth
To town or village nigh (nigheſt is far)

Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; Fame alſo finds us out.
To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I ſeek.
By miracle he may, reply'd the ſwain,
What other way I ſee not, for we here
Live on tough roots and ſtubs, to thirſt inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much miſery and hardſhip born;
But if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of theſe hard ſtones be made thee bread,
So ſhalt thou ſave thyſelf and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched ſeldom taſte.
He ended, and the Son of God reply'd.
Think'ſt thou ſuch force in bread? Is it not written
(For I diſcern thee other than thou ſeem'ſt)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God? who fed,
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount
Moſes was forty days, nor ate nor drank;
And forty days Elijah without food
Wander'd this barren waſte; the ſame I now:
Why doſt thou then ſuggeſt to me diſtruſt,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
Whom thus anſwer'd th' Arch-fiend now undiſ-
'Tis true, I am that ſpirit unfortunate, [guis'd.
Who leagu'd with millions more in raſh revolt
Kept not my happy ſtation, but was driven
With them from bliſs to the bottomleſs deep,

Yet to that hideous place not ſo confin'd
By rigor unconniving, but that oft
Leaving my dolorous priſon I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of Earth
Or range in th' air, nor from the Heav'n of Heav'ns
Hath he excluded my reſort ſometimes.
I came among the ſons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him, and illuſtrate his high worth;
And when to all his angels he propos'd
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies
To his deſtruction, as I had in charge,
For what he bids I do: though I have loſt
Much luſtre of my native brightneſs, loſt
To be belov'd of God, I have not loſt
To love, at leaſt contemplate and admire
What I ſee excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous, I ſhould ſo have loſt all ſenſe.
What can be then leſs in me than deſire
To ſee thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wiſdom, and behold thy Godlike deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why ſhould I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I loſt not what I loſt, rather by them

I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them of my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be; but long since with woe
Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens ought each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd:
This wounds me most (what can it less?) that man,
Man fall'n shall be restor'd, I never more.
To whom our Saviour sternly thus reply'd.
Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns: thou com'st indeed,
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendor, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
A spectacle of ruin or of scorn
To all the host of Heav'n: the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment, representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,

So never more in Hell than when in Heav'n.
But thou art ſerviceable to Heav'n's King.
Wilt thou impute to' obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleaſure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to miſdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to' afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other ſervice was thy choſen taſk,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy ſuſtenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'ſt to truth; all oracles
By thee are giv'n, and what confeſs'd more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing ſomewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy anſwers, what but dark,
Ambiguous and with double ſenſe deluding,
Which they who aſk'd have ſeldom underſtood,
And not well underſtood as good not known?
Who ever by conſulting at thy ſhrine
Return'd the wiſer, or the more inſtruct
To fly or follow what concern'd him moſt,
And run not ſooner to his fatal ſnare?
For God hath juſtly giv'n the nations up
To thy deluſions; juſtly ſince they fell
Idolatrous: but when his purpoſe is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence haſt thou then thy truth,
But from him or his angels preſident
In every province? who themſelves diſdaining

To' approach thy temples, give thee in command
What to the ſmalleſt tittle thou ſhalt ſay
To thy adorers; thou with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning paraſite obey'ſt;
Then to thyſelf aſcrib'ſt the truth foretold.
But this thy glory ſhall be ſoon retrench'd;
No more ſhalt thou by oracling abuſe
The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with pomp and ſacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos or elſewhere,
At leaſt in vain, for they ſhall find thee mute.
God hath now ſent his Living Oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And ſends his Spi'rit of Truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requiſite for men to know.
  So ſpake our Saviour; but the ſubtle Fiend,
Though inly ſtung with anger and diſdain
Diſſembled, and this anſwer ſmooth return'd.
  Sharply thou haſt inſiſted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But miſery hath wreſted from me: where
Eaſily canſt thou find one miſerable,
And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth;
If it may ſtand him more in ſtead to lie,
Say and unſay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord:
From thee I can and muſt ſubmiſs endure
Check or reproof, and glad to 'ſcape ſo quit.

Hard are the ways of Truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue diſcours'd, pleaſing to th' ear,
And tuneable as Sylvan pipe or ſong;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? moſt men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come (ſince no man comes)
And talk at leaſt, though I deſpair to' attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wiſe and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous prieſt
To tread his ſacred courts, and miniſter
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing, and vouchſaf'd his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inſpir'd; diſdain not ſuch acceſs to me.
To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow.
Thy coming hither, though I know thy ſcope,
I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'ſt
Permiſſion from above; thou canſt not more.
He added not; and Satan bowing low
His gray diſſimulation, diſappear'd
Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her ſullen wings to double-ſhade
The deſert; fowls in their clay neſts were couch'd;
And now wild beaſts came forth the woods to roam.

The End of the Firſt Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK II.

MEAN while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expresly call'd
Jesus Messiah Son of God declar'd,
And on that high authority had believ'd,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd, I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in holy Writ not nam'd,
Now missing him their joy so lately found,
So lately found, and so abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt:
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount, and missing long;
And the great Tishbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heav'n, yet once again to come.
Therefore as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho
The city' of Palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city wall'd
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa; but return'd in vain.

Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whisp'ring play,
Plain fishermen, no greater men them call,
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints out-breath'd.
Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth;
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd;
Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath wrapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel,
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the kings of th' Earth how they oppress
Thy chosen, to what highth their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise and vindicate
Thy glory, free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him,
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have convers'd;

Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his Providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recal,
Mock us with his bleſt ſight, then ſnatch him hence;
Soon we ſhall ſee our Hope, our Joy return.
  Thus they out of their plaints new hope reſume
To find whom at the firſt they found unſought:
But to his mother Mary, when ſhe ſaw
Others return from baptiſm, not her ſon,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
Within her breaſt though calm, her breaſt though pure,
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubled thoughts, which ſhe in ſighs thus clad.
  O what avails me now that honor high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that ſalute
Hail highly favor'd, among women bleſt!
While I to ſorrows am no leſs advanc'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore,
In ſuch a ſeaſon born when ſcarce a ſhed
Could be obtain'd to ſhelter him or me
From the bleak air; a ſtable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet ſoon enforc'd to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murd'rous king
Were dead, who ſought his life, and miſſing fill'd
With infant blood the ſtreets of Bethlehem;
From Egypt home return'd, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life

Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king; but now
Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice;
I look'd for some great change; to honor? no,
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israël, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce; this is my favor'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself; but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a store-house long of things
And say'ings laid up, portending strange events.
    Thus Mary pond'ring oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:

The while her Son tracing the desert wild,
Sole but with holiest meditations fed
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on Earth, and mission high:
For Satan with sly preface to return
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank he thus began.

Princes, Heav'n's ancient Sons, ethereal Thrones,
Demonian Spirits now, from th' element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath,
So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble; such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence was impower'd,
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him, but find
Far other labor to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam first of men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,
However to this Man inferior far,
If he be man by mother's side at least,

With more than human gifts from Heav'n adorn'd,
Perfections abſolute, graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greateſt deeds.
Therefore I am return'd, leſt confidence
Of my ſucceſs with Eve in Paradiſe
Deceive ye to perſuaſion over-ſure
Of like ſucceeding here; I ſummon all
Rather to be in readineſs, with hand
Or counſel to aſſiſt; leſt I who erſt
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
So ſpake th' old Serpent doubting, and from all
With clamor was aſſur'd their utmoſt aid
At his command; when from amidſt them roſe
Belial, the diſſoluteſt ſpi'rit that fell,
The ſenſualleſt, and after Aſmodai
The fleſhlieſt incubus, and thus adviſ'd.
Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the faireſt found;
Many are in each region paſſing fair
As the noon ſky; more like to goddeſſes
Than mortal creatures, graceful and diſcreet,
Expert in amorous arts, inchanting tongues
Perſuaſive, virgin majeſty with mild
And ſweet allay'd, yet terrible to' approach,
Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to ſoft'n and tame
Severeſt temper, ſmooth the rugged'ſt brow,

Enerve, and with voluptuous hope diſſolve,
Draw out with credulous deſire, and lead
At will the manlieſt, reſoluteſt breaſt,
As the magnetic hardeſt iron draws.
Women, when nothing elſe, beguil'd the heart
Of wiſeſt Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow to the gods of his wives.
To whom quick anſwer Satan thus return'd.
Belial, in much uneven ſcale thou weigh'ſt
All others by thyſelf; becauſe of old
Thou thyſelf doat'dſt on womankind, admiring
Their ſhape, their color, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'ſt, but taken with ſuch toys.
Before the flood thou with thy luſty crew,
Falſe titled Sons of God, roaming the Earth
Caſt wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not ſeen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'ſt,
In wood or grove by moſſy fountain ſide,
In valley or green meadow, to way-lay
Some beauty rare, Caliſta, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more.
Too long, then lay'ſt thy ſcapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
Satir, or Faun, or Sylvan? But theſe haunts
Delight not all; among the ſons of men,

How many' have with a ſmile made ſmall account
Of Beauty and her lures, eaſily ſcorn'd
All her aſſaults, on worthier things intent?
Remember that Pellean conqueror,
A youth, how all the beauties of the Eaſt
He ſlightly view'd, and ſlightly overpaſs'd;
How he ſirnam'd of Africa diſmiſs'd
In his prime youth the fair Iberian maid,
For Solomon, he liv'd at eaſe, and full
Of honor, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher deſign than to enjoy his ſtate;
Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
But he whom we attempt is wiſer far
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
Made and ſet wholly on th' accompliſhment
Of greateſt things; what woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leiſure will vouchſafe an eye
Of fond deſire? or ſhould ſhe confident,
As ſitting queen ador'd on Beauty's throne,
Deſcend with all her winning charms begirt
To' enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, ſo fables tell;
How would one look from his majeſtic brow
Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,
Diſcount'nance her deſpis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe? for Beauty ſtands

In th' admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; ceafe to' admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat and fhrink into a trivial toy,
At every fudden flighting quite abafh'd:
Therefore with manlier objects we muft try
His conftancy, with fuch as have more fhow
Of worth, of honor, glory', and popular praife;
Rocks whereon greateft men have ofteft wreck'd;
Or that which only feems to fatisfy
Lawful defires of Nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wildernefs;
The reft commit to me, I fhall let pafs
No' advantage, and his ftrength as oft affay.
  He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclame;
Then forthwith to him takes a chofen band
Of fpirits likeft to himfelf in guile
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If caufe were to unfold fome active fcene
Of various perfons, each to know his part;
Then to the defert takes with thefe his flight;
Where ftill from fhade to fhade the Son of God
After forty days fafting had remain'd,
Now hungring firft, and to himfelf thus faid.
  Where will this end? four times ten days I've pafs'd
Wand'ring this woody maze, and human food
Nor tafted, nor had appetite; that faft
To virtue I impute not, or count part

Of what I ſuffer here; if Nature need not,
Or God ſupport Nature without repaſt
Though needing, what praiſe is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what ſhe aſks; yet God
Can ſatisfy that need ſome other way,
Though hunger ſtill remain: ſo it remain
Without this body's waſting, I content me,
And from the ſting of famin fear no harm,
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed
Me hungring more to do my Father's will.
  It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in ſilent walk, then laid him down
Under the hoſpitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he ſlept,
And dream'd, as Appetite is wont to dream
Of meats and drinks, Nature's refreſhment ſweet;
Him thought he by the brook of Cherith ſtood,
And ſaw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing ev'n and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to' abſtain from what they [brought:
He ſaw the Prophet alſo how he fled
Into the deſert, and how there he ſlept
Under a juniper; then how awak'd
He found his ſupper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the angel was bid riſe and eat,
And eat the ſecond time after repoſe,
The ſtrength whereof ſuffic'd him forty days;

Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a gueſt with Daniel at his pulſe.
Thus wore out night, and now the herald lark
Left his ground-neſt, high tow'ring to deſcry
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his ſong:
As lightly from his graſſy couch up roſe
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream,
Faſting he went to ſleep, and faſting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his ſteps he rear'd,
From whoſe high top to ken the proſpect round,
If cottage were in view, ſheep-cote or herd;
But cottage, herd, or ſheep-cote none he ſaw,
Only' in a bottom ſaw a pleaſant grove,
With chaunt of tuneful birds reſounding loud;
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To reſt at noon, and enter'd ſoon the ſhade
High rooft, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midſt a woody ſcene;
Nature's own work it ſeem'd (Nature taught Art)
And to a ſuperſtitious eye the haunt
Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs; he view'd it round,
When ſuddenly a man before him ſtood,
Not ruſtic as before, but ſeemlier clad,
As one in city', or court, or palace bred,
And with fair ſpeech theſe words to him addreſs'd.
With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild ſolitude ſo long ſhould bide

Of all things deſtitute, and well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of ſome note,
As ſtory tells, have trod this wilderneſs;
The fugitive bond-woman with her ſon
Out-caſt Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing angel; all the race
Of Iſrael here had famiſh'd, had not God
Rain'd from Heav'n manna; and that prophet bold
Native of Thebez wand'ring here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee theſe forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deſerted here indeed.
  To whom thus Jeſus. What conclud'ſt thou hence?
They all had need, as I thou ſeeſt have none.
  How haſt thou hunger then? Satan reply'd.
Tell me if food were now before thee ſet,
Would'ſt thou not eat? Thereafter as I like
The giver, anſwer'd Jeſus. Why ſhould that
Cauſe thy refuſal? ſaid the ſubtle Fiend.
Haſt thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all creatures by juſt right to thee
Duty and ſervice, not to ſtay till bid,
But tender all their power? nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd firſt
To idols, thoſe young Daniel could refuſe;
Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who
Would ſcruple that, with want oppreſs'd? Behold
Nature aſham'd, or better to expreſs,

Troubled that thou ſhould'ſt hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the elements her choiceſt ſtore
To treat thee as beſeems, and as her Lord
With honor, only deign to ſit and eat.
  He ſpake no dream, for as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld
In ample ſpace under the broadeſt ſhade
A table richly ſpread, in regal mode,
With diſhes pil'd, and meats of nobleſt ſort
And ſavor, beaſts of chaſe, or fowl of game,
In paſtry built, or from the ſpit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber ſteam'd; all fiſh from ſea or ſhore,
Freſhet, or purling brook, of ſhell or fin,
And exquiſiteſt name, for which was drain'd
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coaſt.
Alas how ſimple, to theſe cates compar'd,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!
And at a ſtately ſide-board by the wine
That fragrant ſmell diffus'd, in order ſtood
Tall ſtripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas; diſtant more
Under the trees now tripp'd, now ſolemn ſtood
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flow'rs from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of th' Heſperides, that ſeem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled ſince
Of faery damſels met in foreſt wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,

Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore:
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming ſtrings, or charming pipes, and winds
Of gentleſt gale Arabian odors fann'd
From their ſoft wings, and Flora's earlieſt ſmells.
Such was the ſplendor, and the Tempter now
His invitation earneſtly renew'd.
 What doubts the Son of God to ſit and eat?
Theſe are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
Defends the touching of theſe viands pure;
Their taſte no knowledge works at leaſt of evil,
But life preſerves, deſtroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with ſweet reſtorative delight.
All theſe are ſpi'rits of air, and woods, and ſprings,
Thy gentle miniſters, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
What doubt'ſt thou Son of God? ſit down and eat.
 To whom thus Jeſus temp'rately reply'd.
Said'ſt thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my power that right to uſe?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me beſt, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as ſoon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderneſs,
And call ſwift flights of angels miniſtrant
Array'd in glory on my cup to' attend:
Why ſhould'ſt thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?

And with my hunger what haſt thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy ſpecious gifts no gifts but guiles.
To whom thus anſwer'd Satan malecontent.
That I have alſo power to give thou ſeeſt;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have beſtow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Choſe to impart to thy apparent need,
Why ſhould'ſt thou not accept it? but I ſee
What I can do or offer is ſuſpect;
Of theſe things others quickly will diſpoſe,
Whoſe pains have earn'd the far fet ſpoil. With that
Both table and proviſion vaniſh'd quite
With ſound of Harpies' wings, and talons heard;
Only th' impórtune Tempter ſtill remain'd,
And with theſe words his temptation purſu'd.
By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance invincible beſides,
For no allurement yields to appetite,
And all thy heart is ſet on high deſigns,
High actions; but wherewith to be achiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterpriſe;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyſelf
Bred up in poverty and ſtraits at home,
Loſt in a deſert here and hunger-bit:

Which way or from what hope doſt thou aſpire
To greatneſs? whence authority deriv'ſt?
What followers, what retinue canſt thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canſt feed them on thy coſt?
Money brings honor, friends, conqueſt, and realms:
What rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
And his ſon Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
(Thy throne) but gold that got him puiſſant friends?
Therefore, if at great things thou would'ſt arrive,
Get riches firſt, get wealth, and treaſure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me;
Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favor thrive in wealth amain,
While Virtue, Valor, Wiſdom ſit in want.
  To whom thus Jeſus patiently reply'd.
Yet wealth without theſe three is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
Witneſs thoſe ancient empires of the Earth,
In highth of all their flowing wealth diſſolv'd:
But men endued with theſe have oft attain'd
In loweſt poverty to higheſt deeds;
Gideon, and Jephtha, and the ſhepherd lad,
Whoſe offſpring on the throne of Judah ſat
So many ages, and ſhall yet regain
That ſeat, and reign in Iſrael without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done

Worthy' of memorial) canſt thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
For I eſteem thoſe names of men ſo poor
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches though offer'd from the hand of kings.
And what in me ſeems wanting, but that I
May alſo in this poverty as ſoon
Accompliſh what they did, perhaps and more?
Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wiſe man's cumbrance if not ſnare, more apt
To ſlacken Virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do ought may merit praiſe.
What if with like averſion I reject
Riches and realms; yet not for that a crown,
Golden in ſhow, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and ſleepleſs nights
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his ſhoulders each man's burthen lies;
For therein ſtands the office of a king,
His honor, virtue, merit and chief praiſe,
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himſelf, and rules
Paſſions, deſires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wiſe and virtuous man attains:
And who attains not, ill aſpires to rule
Cities of men, or headſtrong multitudes,
Subject himſelf to anarchy within,
Or lawleſs paſſions in him which he ſerves.

But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrin, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which to a generous mind
So reigning can be no sincere delight.
Besides to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a scepter, oftest better miss'd.

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK III.

So ſpake the Son of God, and Satan ſtood
A while as mute, confounded what to ſay,
What to reply, confuted and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift;
At length collecting all his ſerpent wiles,
With ſoothing words renew'd, him thus accoſts.
  I ſee thou know'ſt what is of uſe to know,
What beſt to ſay canſt ſay, to do canſt do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wiſe, juſt, the perfect ſhape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth conſult,
Thy counſel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, thoſe oraculous gems
On Aaron's breaſt; or tongue of ſeers old
Infallible: or wert thou ſought to deeds
That might require th' array of war, thy ſkill
Of conduct would be ſuch, that all the world
Could not ſuſtain thy proweſs, or ſubſiſt
In battel, though againſt thy few in arms.
Theſe godlike virtues wherefore doſt thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obſcure
In ſavage wilderneſs? wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyſelf

The ſame and glory, glory the reward
That ſole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of moſt erected ſpi'rits, moſt temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleaſures elſe deſpiſe,
All treaſures and all gain eſteem as droſs,
And dignities and powers all but the higheſt?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the ſon
Of Macedonian Philip had ere theſe
Won Aſia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his diſpoſe; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirſt of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd
With glory, wept that he had liv'd ſo long
Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.
  To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.
Thou neither doſt perſuade me to ſeek wealth
For empire's ſake, nor empire to affect
For glory's ſake by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praiſe, if always praiſe unmix'd?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miſcellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and well weigh'd, ſcarce worth the praiſe?
They praiſe, and they admire they know not what,

And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by ſuch extoll'd,
To live upon their tongues and be their talk,
Of whom to be diſprais'd were no ſmall praiſe?
His lot who dares be ſingularly good.
Th' intelligent among them and the wiſe
Are few, and glory ſcarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on th' Earth, with approbation marks
The juſt man, and divulges him through Heav'n
To all his angels, who with true applauſe
Recount his praiſes: thus he did to Job,
When to extend his fame through Heav'n and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'ſt well remember,
He aſk'd thee, Haſt thou ſeen my ſervant Job?
Famous he was in Heav'n, on Earth leſs known;
Where glory is falſe glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy' of fame.
They err who count it glorious to ſubdue
By conqueſt far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great battels win,
Great cities by aſſault: what do theſe worthies,
But rob and ſpoil, burn, ſlaughter, and inſlave
Peaceable nations, neighb'ring, or remote,
Made captive, yet deſerving freedom more
Than thoſe their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin whereſoe'er they rove,
And all the floriſhing works of Peace deſtroy,

Then ſwell with pride, and muſt be titled Gods,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worſhipt with temple, prieſt and ſacrifice?
One is the ſon of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conqu'ror Death diſcover them ſcarce men,
Rolling in brutiſh vices, and deform'd,
Violent or ſhameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory ought of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wiſdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention ſtill
Him whom thy wrongs with ſaintly patience borne
Made famous in a land and times obſcure;
Who names not now with honor patient Job?
Poor Socrates (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught and ſuffer'd for ſo doing,
For truth's ſake ſuffering death unjuſt, lives now
Equal in fame to proudeſt conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory ought be done,
Ought ſuffer'd; if young African for fame
His waſted country freed from Punic rage,
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at leaſt,
And loſes, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I ſeek glory then, as vain men ſeek,
Oft not deſerv'd? I ſeek not mine, but his
Who ſent me', and thereby witneſs whence I am.
    To whom the Tempter murm'ring thus reply'd.

Think not fo flight of glory; therein leaft
Refembling thy great Father: he feeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; nor content in Heav'n
By all his angels glorify'd, requires
Glory from men, from all men good or bad,
Wife or unwife, no difference, no exemption;
Above all facrifice, or hallow'd gift
Glory' he requires, and glory he receives
Promifcuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us his foes prônounc'd glory' he exacts.
  To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd.
And reafon; fince his Word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to fhow forth his goodnefs, and impart
His good communicable to every foul
Freely; of whom what could he lefs expect
Than glory' and benediction, that is thanks,
The flighteft, eafieft, readieft recompenfe
From them who could return him nothing elfe,
And not returning that would likelieft render
Contempt inftead, difhonor, obloquy?
Hard recompenfe, unfuitable return
For fo much good, fo much beneficence.
But why fhould man feek glory, who' of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy', and fhame?

Who for ſo many benefits receiv'd
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and falſe,
And ſo of all true good himſelf deſpoil'd,
Yet, ſacrilegious, to himſelf would take
That which to God alone of right belongs;
Yet ſo much bounty is in God, ſuch grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himſelf to glory will advance.
  So ſpake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to anſwer, but ſtood ſtruck
With guilt of his own ſin, for he himſelf
Inſatiable of glory had loſt all,
Yet of another plea bethought him ſoon.
  Of glory, as thou wilt, ſaid he, ſo deem,
Worth or not worth the ſeeking, let it paſs:
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To ſit upon thy father David's throne;
By mother's ſide thy father; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Eaſily from poſſeſſion won with arms:
Judæa now and all the Promis'd Land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rul'd
With temp'rate ſway; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'ſt thou to regain
Thy right by ſitting ſtill or thus retiring?

So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his family obtain'd
Tho' priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
With Modin and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow;
But on Occasion's forelock watchful wait.
They themselves rather are occasion best,
Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her Heathen servitude;
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign the sooner it begins;
Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?
To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd.
All things are best fulfill'd in their due time,
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
If of my reign prophetic Writ hath told
That it shall never end, so when begin
The Father in his purpose hath decreed,
He in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be try'd in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,

Without diſtruſt or doubt, that he may know
What I can ſuffer, how obey? who beſt
Can ſuffer, beſt can do; beſt reign, who firſt
Well hath obey'd; juſt trial ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlaſting kingdom, why art thou
Solicitous, what moves thy inquiſition?
Know'ſt thou not that my riſing is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy deſtruction?
To whom the Tempter inly rack'd reply'd.
Let that come when it comes; all hope is loſt
Of my reception into grace; what worſe?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worſe, the expectation more
Of worſe torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worſt; worſt is my port,
My harbour and my ultimate repoſe,
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever for itſelf condemn'd,
And will alike be puniſh'd, whether thou
Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aſpect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil ſtate,
Would ſtand between me and thy Father's ire
(Whoſe ire I dread more than the fire of Hell)

A ſhelter and a kind of ſhading cool
Interpoſition, as a ſummer's cloud.
If I then to the worſt that can be haſte,
Why move thy feet ſo ſlow to what is beſt,
Happieſt both to thyſelf and all the world,
That thou who worthieſt art ſhould'ſt be their king?
Perhaps thou linger'ſt in deep thoughts detain'd
Of th' enterpriſe ſo hazardous and high;
No wonder, for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human Nature can receive, conſider
Thy life hath yet been private, moſt part ſpent
At home, ſcarce view'd the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jeruſalem, few days
Short ſojourn; and what thence couldſt thou obſerve?
The world thou haſt not ſeen, much leſs her glory,
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Beſt ſchool of beſt experience, quickeſt inſight
In all things that to greateſt actions lead.
The wiſeſt, unexperienc'd, will be ever
Timorous and loath, with novice modeſty,
(As he who ſeeking aſſes found a kingdom)
Irreſolute, unhardy, unadventrous:
But I will bring thee where thou ſoon ſhalt quit
Thoſe rudiments, and ſee before thine eyes
The monarchies of th' Earth, their pomp and ſtate,
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyſelf ſo apt, in regal arts,

And regal myſteries, that thou may'ſt know
How beſt their oppoſition to withſtand.
 With that (ſuch power was giv'n him then) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whoſe verdant feet
A ſpacious plain out-ſtretch'd in circuit wide
Lay pleaſant; from his ſide two rivers flow'd,
Th' one winding, th' other ſtrait, and left between
Fair champain with leſs rivers intervein'd,
Then meeting join'd their tribute to the ſea:
Fertil of corn the glebe, of oil and wine;
With herds the paſtures throng'd, with flocks the hills;
Huge cities and high tower'd, that well might ſeem
The ſeats of mightieſt monarchs, and ſo large
The proſpect was, that here and there was room
For barren deſert fountainleſs and dry.
To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began.
 Well have we ſpeeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Foreſt and field and flood, temples and towers,
Cut ſhorter many a league; here thou behold'ſt
Aſſyria and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caſpian lake, thence on
As far as Indus eaſt, Euphrates weſt,
And oft beyond; to ſouth the Perſian bay,
And inacceſſible th'Arabian drouth:
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,

Of that firſt golden monarchy the ſeat,
And ſeat of Salmanaſſar, whoſe ſucceſs
Iſrael in long captivity ſtill mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's houſe
Led captive, and Jeruſalem laid waſte,
Till Cyrus ſet them free; Perſepolis
His city there thou ſeeſt, and Bactra there;
Ecbatana her ſtructure vaſt there ſhows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
There Suſa by Choaſpes, amber ſtream,
The drink of none but kings; of later fame
Built by Emathian, or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Niſibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Cteſiphon,
Turning with eaſy eye thou may'ſt behold.
All theſe the Parthian, now ſome ages paſt,
By great Arſaces led, who founded firſt
That empire, under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And juſt in time thou com'ſt to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Cteſiphon hath gather'd all his hoſt
Againſt the Scythian, whoſe incurſions wild
Have waſted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haſte; ſee, though from far,
His thouſands, in what martial equipage

They iſſue forth, ſteel bows, and ſhafts their arms
Of equal dread in flight, or in purſuit;
All horſemen, in which fight they moſt excel;
See how in warlike muſter they appear,
In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.
He look'd, and ſaw what numbers numberleſs
The city gates out-pour'd, light armed troops
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horſes clad, yet fleet and ſtrong,
Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachoſia, from Candaor eaſt,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucaſus, and dark Iberian dales,
From Atropatia and the neighb'ring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the ſouth
Of Suſiana, to Balſara's haven.
He ſaw them in their forms of battel rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and fly'ing behind them ſhot
Sharp ſleet of arrowy ſhowers againſt the face
Of their purſuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron caſt a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuiraſſiers all in ſteel for ſtanding fight,
Chariots or elephants indors'd with towers
Of archers, nor of lab'ring pioneers
A multitude with ſpades and axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,

Or where plain was raiſe hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after theſe, camels and dromedaries,
And wagons fraught with utenſils of war.
Such forces met not, nor ſo wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Beſieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
The city' of Gallaphrone, from whence to win
The faireſt of her ſex Angelica
His daughter, ſought by many proweſt knights,
Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and ſo numerous was their chivalry;
At ſight whereof the Fiend yet more preſum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.
  That thou may'ſt know I ſeek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way ſecure
On no ſlight grounds thy ſafety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither and ſhown
All this fair ſight: thy kingdom though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unleſs thou
Endevor, as thy father David did,
Thou never ſhalt obtain; prediction ſtill
In all things, and all men, ſuppoſes means,
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
But ſay thou wert poſſeſs'd of David's throne
By free conſent of all, none oppoſit,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldſt thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and ſecure,

Between two ſuch incloſing enemies
Roman and Parthian? therefore one of theſe
Thou muſt make ſure thy own, the Parthian firſt
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invaſion to annoy
Thy country', and captive lead away her kings
Antigonus, and old Hyrcanus bound,
Maugre the Roman: it ſhall be my taſk
To render thee the Parthian at diſpoſe;
Chuſe which thou wilt by conqueſt or by league.
By him thou ſhalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinſtal thee
In David's royal ſeat, his true ſucceſſor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, thoſe Ten Tribes
Whoſe offspring in his territory' yet ſerve,
In Habor, and among the Medes diſpers'd;
Ten ſons of Jacob, two of Joſeph loſt
Thus long from Iſrael, ſerving as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt ſerv'd,
This offer ſets before thee to deliver.
Theſe if from ſervitude thou ſhalt reſtore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæſar not need fear.
To whom our Saviour anſwer'd thus unmov'd.
Much oſtentation vain of fleſhly arm,
And fragil arms, much inſtrument of war

Long in preparing, ſoon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou' haſt ſet; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,
Plauſible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I muſt uſe, thou ſay'ſt, prediction elſe
Will unpredict and fail me of the throne:
My time I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better fartheſt off) is not yet come:
When that comes, think not thou to find me ſlack
On my part ought endevoring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumberſome
Luggage of war there ſhown me, argument
Of human weakneſs rather than of ſtrength.
My brethren, as thou call'ſt them, thoſe Ten Tribes
I muſt deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full ſcepter ſway
To juſt extent over all Iſrael's ſons;
But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
For Iſrael, or for David, or his throne,
When thou ſtood'ſt up his tempter to the pride
Of numb'ring Iſraël, which coſt the lives
Of threeſcore and ten thouſand Iſraelites
By three days' peſtilence? ſuch was thy zeal
To Iſrael then, the ſame that now to me.
As for thoſe captive tribes, themſelves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worſhip calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Aſhtaroth,

And all th' idolatries of Heathen round,
Beſides their other worſe than heath'niſh crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themſelves, or penitent beſought
The God of their foreſathers; but ſo dy'd
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themſelves, diſtinguiſhable ſcarce
From Gentiles, but by circumciſion vain,
And God with idols in their worſhip join'd.
Should I of theſe the liberty regard,
Who freed as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
Headlong would follow'; and to their gods perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan? no, let them ſerve
Their enemies, who ſerve idols with God.
Yet he at length, time to himſelf beſt known,
Remembring Abraham, by ſome wondrous call
May bring them back repentant and ſincere,
And at their paſſing cleave th' Aſſyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haſte,
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the Promis'd Land their fathers paſs'd;
To his due time and providence I leave them.
So ſpake Iſrael's true King, and to the Fiend
Made anſwer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it when with Truth Falſhood contends.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D

BOOK IV.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad succefs
The Tempter ftood, nor had what to reply,
Difcover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the perfuafive rhetoric
That fleek'd his tongue, and won fo much on Eve,
So little here, nay loft; but Eve was Eve,
This far his over-match, who felf-deceiv'd
And rafh, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The ftrength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man who had been matchlefs held
In cunning, over-reach'd where leaft he thought,
To falve his credit, and for very fpite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him ftill,
And never ceafe, though to his fhame the more;
Or as a fwarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-prefs where fweet muft is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming found;
Or furging waves againft a folid rock,
Though all to fhivers dafh'd, th' affault renew,
Vain batt'ry, and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulfe upon repulfe
Met ever, and to fhameful filence brought,
Yet gives not o'er though defp'rate of fuccefs,
And his vain importunity purfues.

He brought our Saviour to the weftern fide
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long but in breadth not wide,
Wafh'd by the fouthern fea, and on the north
To equal length back with a ridge of hills,
That fcreen'd the fruits of th' Earth and feats of men
From cold Septentrion blafts, thence in the midft
Divided by a river, of whofe banks
On each fide an imperial city ftood,
With tow'rs and temples proudly elevate
On fev'n fmall hills, with palaces adorn'd,
Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens and groves prefented to his eyes,
Above the highth of mountains interpos'd:
By what ftrange parallax or optic fkill
Of vifion multiply'd through air, or glafs
Of telefcope, were curious to inquire:
And now the Tempter thus his filence broke.
  The city which thou feeft no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, Queen of the Earth
So far renown'd, and with the fpoils enrich'd
Of nations; there the Capitol thou feeft
Above the reft lifting his ftately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable, and there Mount Palatine,
Th' imperial palace, compafs huge, and high
The ftructure, fkill of nobleft architects,

With gilded battlements, conſpicuous far,
Turrets and terraſes, and glitt'ring ſpires.
Many a fair edifice beſides, more like
Houſes of God, (ſo well I have diſpos'd
My aery microſcope) thou may'ſt behold
Outſide and inſide both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers
In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.
Thence to the gates caſt round thine eye, and ſee
What conflux iſſuing forth, or entring in,
Pretors, proconſuls to their provinces
Haſting, or on return, in robes of ſtate;
Lictors and rods, the enſigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horſe and wings:
Or embaſſies from regions far remote
In various habits on the Appian road,
Or on th' Emilian, ſome from fartheſt ſouth,
Syene', and where the ſhadow both way falls,
Meroe Nilotic ile, and more to weſt,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor ſea;
From th' Aſian kings and Parthian among theſe,
From India and the golden Cherſoneſe,
And utmoſt Indian ile Taprobane,
Duſk faces with white ſilken turbants wreath'd;
From Gallia, Gades, and the Britiſh weſt,
Germans and Scythians, and Sarmatians north
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
All nations now to Rome obedience pay,

To Rome's great Emperor, whoſe wide domain
In ample territory, wealth and power,
Civility of manners, arts and arms,
And long renown, thou juſtly may'ſt prefer
Before the Parthian; theſe two thrones except,
The reſt are barb'rous, and ſcarce worth the ſight,
Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
Theſe having ſhown thee, I have ſhown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emp'ror hath no ſon, and now is old,
Old and laſcivious, and from Rome retir'd
To Capreæ, an iland ſmall but ſtrong
On the Campanian ſhore, with purpoſe there
His horrid luſts in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked favorite
All public cares, and yet of him ſuſpicious,
Hated of all, and hating; with what eaſe,
Indued with regal virtues as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Might'ſt thou expel this monſter from his throne
Now made a ſtye, and in his place aſcending
A victor people free from ſervile yoke?
And with my help thou may'ſt; to me the power
Is giv'n, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no leſs than all the world,
Aim at the high'eſt, without the high'eſt attain'd
Will be for thee no ſitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophecy'd what will.

To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd.
Nor doth this grandeur and majeſtic ſhow
Of luxury, though call'd Magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much leſs my mind; though thou ſhould'ſt add to tell
Their ſumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feaſts
On citron tables or Atlantic ſtone,
(For I have alſo heard, perhaps have read)
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Cryſtal, and myrrhine cups imboſs'd with gems
And ſtuds of pearl, to me ſhould'ſt tell who thirſt
And hunger ſtill: then embaſſies thou ſhow'ſt
From nations far and nigh; what honor that,
But tedious waſte of time to ſit and hear
So many hollow complements and lies,
Outlandiſh flatteries? then proceed'ſt to talk
Of th' emperor, how eaſily ſubdued,
How glorioufly; I ſhall, thou ſay'ſt, expel
A brutiſh monſter: what if I withal
Expel a devil who firſt made him ſuch?
Let his tormenter Conſcience find him out;
For him I was not ſent, nor yet to free
That people victor once, now vile and baſe,
Deſervedly made vaſſal, who once juſt,
Frugal, and mild, and temp'rate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhauſted all

By luſt and rapin; firſt ambitious grown
Of triumph, that inſulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their ſports to blood inur'd
Of fighting beaſts, and men to beaſts expos'd,
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier ſtill,
And from the daily ſcene effeminate.
What wiſe and valiant man would ſeek to free
Theſe thus degenerate, by themſelves inſlav'd,
Or could of inward ſlaves make outward free?
Know therefore when my ſeaſon comes to ſit
On David's throne, it ſhall be like a tree
Spreading and overſhadowing all the Earth,
Or as a ſtone that ſhall to pieces daſh
All monarchies beſides throughout the world,
And of my kingdom there ſhall be no end:
Means there ſhall be to this, but what the means
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.
  To whom the Tempter impudent reply'd.
I ſee all offers made by me how ſlight
Thou valueſt, becauſe offer'd, and reject'ſt:
Nothing will pleaſe the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than ſtill to contradict:
On the other ſide know alſo thou, that I
On what I offer ſet as high eſteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All theſe which in a moment thou behold'ſt,
The kingdoms of the world to thee I give;
For giv'n to me, I give to whom I pleaſe,

No trifle; yet with this reſerve, not elſe,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worſhip me as thy ſuperior lord,
Eaſily done, and hold them all of me;
For what can leſs ſo great a gift deſerve?
 Whom thus our Saviour anſwer'd with diſdain.
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers leſs,
Now both abhor, ſince thou haſt dar'd to utter
Th' abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou haſt permiſſion on me. It is written
The firſt of all commandments, Thou ſhalt worſhip
The Lord thy God, and only him ſhalt ſerve;
And dar'ſt thou to the Son of God propound
To worſhip thee accurs'd, now more accurs'd
For this attempt bolder than that on Eve,
And more blaſphemous? which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given,
Permitted rather, and by thee uſurp'd;
Other donation none thou canſt produce:
If giv'n, by whom but by the King of kings,
God over all ſupreme? if giv'n to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid? But gratitude in thee is loſt
Long ſince. Wert thou ſo void of fear or ſhame,
As offer them to me the Son of God,
To me my own, on ſuch abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worſhip thee as God?

Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'ſt
That evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.
 To whom the Fiend with fear abaſh'd reply'd.
Be not ſo ſore offended, Son of God,
Though ſons of God both angels are and men,
If I to try whether in higher ſort
Than theſe thou bear'ſt that title, have propos'd
What both from men and angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the Earth
Nations beſides from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd and world beneath;
Who then thou art, whoſe coming is foretold
To me ſo fatal, me it moſt concerns.
The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honor left and more eſteem;
Me nought advantag'd, miſſing what I aim'd.
Therefore let paſs, as they are tranſitory,
The kingdoms of this world; I ſhall no more
Adviſe thee; gain them as thou canſt, or not.
And thou thyſelf ſeem'ſt otherwiſe inclin'd
Than to a worldly crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound diſpute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When ſlipping from thy mother's eye thou went'ſt
Alone into the temple; there waſt found
Among the graveſt Rabbies diſputant
On points and queſtions fitting Moſes' chair,
Teaching not taught; the childhood ſhows the man,

As morning ſhows the day. Be famous then
By wiſdom; as thy empire muſt extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend:
All knowledge is not couch'd in Moſes' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;
The Gentiles alſo know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by Nature's light;
And with the Gentiles much thou muſt converſe,
Ruling them by perſuaſion as thou mean'ſt;
Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee hold converſation meet?
How wilt thou reaſon with them, how refute
Their idoliſms, traditions, paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is beſt evinc'd.
Look once more ere we leave this ſpecular mount
Weſtward, much nearer by ſouthweſt, behold
Where on the Ægean ſhore a city ſtands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the ſoil,
Athens the eye of Greece, mother of Arts
And Eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hoſpitable, in her ſweet receſs.
City' or ſuburban, ſtudious walks and ſhades;
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the ſummer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus with the ſound
Of bees induſtrious murmur oft invites

To ſtudious muſing; there Iliſſus rolls
His whiſp'ring ſtream: within the walls then view
The ſchools of ancient ſages; his who bred
Great Alexander to ſubdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
There ſhalt thou hear and learn the ſecret power
Of Harmony in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various-meaſur'd verſe,
Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher ſung,
Blind Meleſigenes thence Homer call'd,
Whoſe poem Phœbus challeng'd for his own.
Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In Chorus or Iambic, teachers beſt
Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
In brief ſententious precepts, while they treat
Of Fate, and Chance, and change in human life;
High actions, and high paſſions beſt deſcribing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Thoſe ancient, whoſe reſiſtleſs eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie,
Shook th' arſenal and fulmin'd over Greece,
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne:
To ſage Philoſophy next lend thine ear,
From Heav'n deſcended to the low-rooft houſe
Of Socrates; ſee there his tenement,
Whom well inſpir'd the oracle pronounc'd
Wiſeſt of men; from whoſe mouth iſſued forth

Mellifluous ſtreams that water'd all the ſchools
Of Academics old and new, with thoſe
Sirnam'd Peripatetics, and the ſect
Epicurean, and the Stoic ſevere;
Theſe here revolve, or, as thou lik'ſt, at home,
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
Theſe rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyſelf, much more with empire join'd.
To whom our Saviour ſagely thus reply'd.
Think not but that I know theſe things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I ſhort
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the Fountain of Light,
No other doctrin needs, though granted true;
But theſe are falſe, or little elſe but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The firſt and wiſeſt of them all profeſs'd
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell and ſmooth conceits;
A third ſort doubted all things, though plain ſenſe;
Others in virtue plac'd felicity,
But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
In corporal pleaſure he, and careleſs eaſe;
The Stoic laſt in philoſophic pride,
By him call'd Virtue; and his virtuous man,
Wiſe, perfect in himſelf, and all poſſeſſing,
Equals to God, oft ſhames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all

Wealth, pleaſure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which when he liſts he leaves, or boaſts he can;
For all his tedious talk is but vain boaſt,
Or ſubtle ſhifts conviction to evade.
Alas, what can they teach, and not miſlead,
Ignorant of themſelves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himſelf, on grace depending?
Much of the ſoul they talk, but all awry,
And in themſelves ſeek virtue, and to themſelves
All glory arrogate, to God give none,
Rather accuſe him under uſual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardleſs quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore ſeeks in theſe
True Wiſdom, finds her not, or by deluſion
Far worſe, her falſe reſemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wiſe men have ſaid, are weariſome; who reads
Inceſſantly, and to his reading brings not
A ſpirit and judgment equal or ſuperior,
(And what he brings what needs he elſewhere ſeek?)
Uncertain and unſettled ſtill remains,
Deep vers'd in books and ſhallow in himſelf,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a ſpunge;
As children gathering pebbles on the ſhore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With muſic or with poem, where ſo ſoon

As in our native language can I find
That ſolace? All our law and ſtory ſtrow'd
With hymns, our pſalms with artful terms inſcrib'd,
Our Hebrew ſongs and harps in Babylon,
That pleas'd ſo well our victor's ear, declare
That rather Greece from us theſe arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated, while they loudeſt ſing
The vices of their deities, and their own
In fable, hymn, or ſong, ſo perſonating
Their gods ridiculous, and themſelves paſt ſhame.
Remove their ſwelling epithets thick laid
As varniſh on a harlot's cheek, the reſt,
Thin ſown with ought of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's ſongs, to all true taſtes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men,
The holieſt of holies, and his ſaints;
Such are from God inſpir'd, not ſuch from thee,
Unleſs where moral virtue is expreſs'd
By light of Nature not in all quite loſt.
Their orators thou then extoll'ſt, as thoſe
The top of eloquence, ſtatiſts indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may ſeem;
But herein to our Prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The ſolid rules of civil government
In their majeſtic unaffected ſtile
Than all th' oratory of Greece and Rome.

In them is plaineſt taught, and eaſieſt learnt,
What makes a nation happy', and keeps it ſo,
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
Theſe only with our law beſt form a king.
So ſpake the Son of God; but Satan now
Quite at a loſs, for all his darts were ſpent,
Thus to our Saviour with ſtern brow reply'd.
Since neither wealth, nor honor, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleaſes thee, nor ought
By me propos'd in life contemplative,
Or active, tended on by glory', or fame,
What doſt thou in this world? the wilderneſs
For thee is fitteſt place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee; yet remember
What I foretel thee, ſoon thou ſhalt have cauſe
To wiſh thou never hadſt rejected thus
Nicely or cautiouſly my offer'd aid,
Which would have ſet thee in ſhort time with eaſe
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulneſs of time, thy ſeaſon,
When prophecies of thee are beſt fulfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read ought in Heav'n,
Or Heav'n write ought of Fate, by what the ſtars
Voluminous, or ſingle characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to ſpell,
Sorrows, and labors, oppoſition, hate
Attends thee, ſcorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and ſtripes, and laſtly cruel death;

A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
Real or allegoric I diſcern not,
Nor when, eternal ſure, as without end,
Without beginning; for no date prefix'd
Directs me in the ſtarry rubric ſet.
  So ſay'ing he took (for ſtill he knew his power
Not yet expir'd) and to the wilderneſs
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to diſappear. Darkneſs now roſe,
As day-light ſunk, and brought in louring Night
Her ſhadowy offspring, unſubſtantial both,
Privation mere of light and abſent day.
Our Saviour meek and with untroubled mind
After his aery jaunt, though hurried ſore,
Hungry and cold betook him to his reſt,
Wherever, under ſome concourſe of ſhades,
Whoſe branching arms thick intertwin'd might ſhield
From dews and damps of night his ſhelter'd head,
But ſhelter'd ſlept in vain, for at his head
The Tempter watch'd, and ſoon with ugly dreams
Diſturb'd his ſleep; and either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n, the clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
Fierce ran with lightning mix'd, water with fire
In ruin reconcil'd: nor ſlept the winds
Within their ſtony caves, but ruſh'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell

On the vex'd wilderneſs, whoſe talleſt pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and ſturdieſt oaks
Bow'd their ſtiff necks, loaden with ſtormy blaſts,
Or torn up ſheer: ill waſt thou ſhrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only ſtood'ſt
Unſhaken; nor yet ſtay'd the terror there,
Infernal ghoſts, and helliſh furies, round
Environ'd thee, ſome howl'd, ſome yell'd, ſome [ſhriek'd,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Satſt unappall'd in calm and ſinleſs peace.
Thus paſs'd the night ſo foul, till Morning fair
Came forth with pilgrim ſteps in amice gray,
Who with her radiant finger ſtill'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And griſly ſpectres, which the Fiend had rais'd
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the ſun with more effectual beams
Had cheer'd the face of Earth, and dry'd the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more freſh and green,
After a night of ſtorm ſo ruinous,
Clear'd up their choiceſt notes in buſh and ſpray
To gratulate the ſweet return of Morn;
Nor yet amidſt this joy and brighteſt morn
Was abſent, after all his miſchief done,
The Prince of Darkneſs, glad would alſo ſeem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came,

Yet with no new device, they all were ſpent,
Rather by this his laſt affront reſolv'd,
Deſp'rate of better courſe, to vent his rage,
And mad deſpite to be ſo oft repell'd.
Him walking on a ſunny hill he found,
Back'd on the north and weſt by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he ſtarts in wonted ſhape,
And in a careleſs mood thus to him ſaid.
  Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a diſmal night; I heard the wrack
As earth and ſky would mingle; but myſelf
Was diſtant; and theſe flaws, though mortals fear
As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of Heav'n, [them
Or to the Earth's dark baſis underneath,
Are to the main as inconſiderable
And harmleſs, if not wholeſome, as a ſneeze
To man's leſs univerſe, and ſoon are gone;
Yet as being oft times noxious where they light
On man, beaſt, plant, waſteful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in th' affairs of men,
Over whoſe heads they roar, and ſeem to point,
They oft fore-ſignify and threaten ill:
This tempeſt at this deſert moſt was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'ſt.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didſt reject
The perfect ſeaſon offer'd with my aid
To win thy deſtin'd ſeat, but wilt prolong

All to the puſh of Fate, purſue thy way
Of gaining David's throne no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told,
Thou ſhalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For angels have proclam'd it, but concealing
The time and means: each act is rightlieſt done,
Not when it muſt, but when it may be beſt:
If thou obſerve not this, be ſure to find
What I foretold thee, many a hard aſſay
Of dangers, and adverſities, and pains,
Ere thou of Iſrael's ſcepter get faſt hold;
Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a ſure fore-going ſign.
So talk'd he while the Son of God went on
And ſtay'd not, but in brief him anſwer'd thus.
Me worſe than wet thou find'ſt not; other harm
Thoſe terrors which thou ſpeak'ſt of did me none;
I never fear'd they could, though noiſing loud
And threatning nigh; what they can do as ſigns
Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn
As falſe portents, not ſent from God, but thee;
Who knowing I ſhall reign paſt thy preventing,
Obtrud'ſt thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
At leaſt might ſeem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious ſpi'rit, and wouldſt be thought my god,
And ſtorm'ſt refus'd, thinking to terrify

Me to thy will; desist, thou art discern'd
And toil'st in vain, nor me in vain molest.
To whom the Fiend now swoln with rage reply'd.
Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born;
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt:
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length
Announc'd by Gabriel with the first I knew,
And of th' angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
Till at the ford of Jordan whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I among the rest,
Though not to be baptiz'd, by voice from Heav'n
Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sense;
The Son of God I also am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd.
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild;

Where by all best conjectures I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
By parl, or composition, truce, or league
To win him, or win from him what I can.
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and as a center, firm,
To th' utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Not more; for honors, riches, kingdoms, glory
Have been before contemn'd, and may again:
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heav'n,
Another method I must now begin.
So say'ing he caught him up, and without wing
Of hippogrif bore through the air sublime
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain;
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
There on the highest pinnacle he set
The Son of God, and added thus in scorn.

There ftand, if thou wilt ftand; to ftand upright
Will afk thee fkill; I to thy Father's houfe
Have brought thee',and higheft plac'd, higheft is beft,
Now fhow thy progeny; if not to ftand,
Caft thyfelf down; fafely, if Son of God:
For it is written, He will give command
Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
They fhall uplift thee, left at any time
Thou chance to dafh thy foot againft a ftone.
To whom thus Jefus; Alfo it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God: he faid and ftood:
But Satan fmitten with amazement fell.
As when Earth's fon Antæus (to compare
Small things with greateft) in Iraffa ftrove
With Jove's Alcides, and oft foil'd ftill rofe,
Receiving from his mother Earth new ftrength,
Frefh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
Throttled at length in th' air, expir'd and fell;
So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
Renewing frefh affaults, amidft his pride
Fell whence he ftood to fee his Victor fall.
And as that Theban monfter that propos'd
Her riddle', and him who folv'd it not devour'd,
That once found out and folv'd, for grief and fpite
Caft herfelf headlong from th' Ifmenian fteep;
So ftruck with dread and anguifh fell the Fiend,
And to his crew, that fat confulting, brought

Joyleſs triumphals of his hop'd ſucceſs,
Ruin, and deſperation, and diſmay,
Who durſt ſo proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and ſtrait a fiery globe
Of angels on full ſail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans receiv'd him ſoft
From his uneaſy ſtation, and up bore
As on a floting couch through the blithe air,
Then in a flow'ry valley ſet him down
On a green bank, and ſet before him ſpread
A table of celeſtial food, divine,
Ambroſial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of Life,
And from the fount of Life ambroſial drink,
That ſoon refreſh'd him wearied, and repair'd
What hunger, if ought hunger had impair'd,
Or thirſt; and as he fed, angelic quires
Sung heav'nly anthems of his victory
Over temptation, and the Tempter proud.
  True image of the Father, whether thron'd
In the boſom of Bliſs, and light of light
Conceiving, or remote from Heav'n, inſhrin'd
In fleſhly tabernacle, and human form,
Wand'ring the wilderneſs, whatever place,
Habit, or ſtate, or motion, ſtill expreſſing
The Son of God, with Godlike force indued
Againſt th' attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradiſe; him long of old

Thou didſt debel, and down from Heaven caſt
With all his army, now thou haſt aveng'd
Supplanted Adam, and by vanquiſhing
Temptation, haſt regain'd loſt Paradiſe,
And fruſtrated the conqueſt fraudulent:
He never more henceforth will dare ſet foot
In Paradiſe to tempt; his ſnares are broke:
For though that ſeat of earthly bliſs be fail'd,
A fairer Paradiſe is founded now
For Adam and his choſen ſons, whom thou
A Saviour art come down to re-inſtal
Where they ſhall dwell ſecure, when time ſhall be,
Of Tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal Serpent, ſhalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal ſtar
Or lightning thou ſhalt fall from Heav'n, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'ſt
Thy wound, yet not thy laſt and deadlieſt wound,
By this repulſe receiv'd, and hold'ſt in Hell
No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt; hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he all unarm'd
Shall chaſe thee with the terror of his voice
From thy demoniac holds, poſſeſſion foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they ſhall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of ſwine,
Leſt he command them down into the Deep

Bound, and to torment ſent before their time.
Hail Son of the Moſt High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to ſave mankind.
 Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
Sung Victor, and from heav'nly feaſt refreſh'd
Brought on his way with joy; he unobſerv'd
Home to his mother's houſe private return'd.

The End of Paradiſe Regain'd.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

Τραγωδια μιμησις πραξεως σπȣδαιας, &c.

Ariſtot. Poet. cap. 6.

Tragœdia eſt imitatio actionis ſeriæ, &c. per miſericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum luſtrationem.

OF THAT SORT OF

DRAMATIC POEM

WHICH IS CALLED TRAGEDY.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently compos'd, hath been ever held the graveſt, moraleſt, and moſt profitable of all other poems: therefore ſaid by Ariſtotle to be of power by raiſing pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of thoſe and ſuch like paſſions, that is, to temper and reduce them to juſt meaſure with a kind of delight, ſtirr'd up by reading or ſeeing thoſe paſſions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his aſſertion: for ſo in phyſic things of melancholic hue and quality are us'd againſt melancholy, ſour againſt ſour, ſalt to remove ſalt humors. Hence philoſophers and other graveſt writers, as Cicero, Plutarch and others, frequently cite out of tragic poets, both to adorn and illuſtrate their

discourse. The Apostle Paul himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of Euripides into the text of Holy Scripture, 1 *Cor.* XV. 33.; *and Paræus commenting on the Revelation, divides the whole book as a tragedy, into acts distinguished each by a chorus of heavenly harpings and song between. Heretofore men in highest dignity have labor'd not a little to be thought able to compose a tragedy. Of that honor Dionysius the Elder was no less ambitious than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Augustus Cesar also had begun his Ajax, but unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinish'd. Seneca the philosopher is by some thought the author of those tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeseeming the sanctity of his person to write a tragedy, which is intitled Christ Suffering. This is mention'd to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common interludes; hap'ning through the poets' error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar persons, which by all judicious hath been counted absurd; and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though ancient tragedy use no prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defense, or explanation, that which Martial calls an epistle; in behalf of this tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus*

much before-hand may be epistled; that chorus is here introduc'd after the Greek manner, not ancient only but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modeling therefore of this poem, with good reason, the Ancients and Italians are rather follow'd, as of much more authority and fame. The measure of verse us'd in the chorus is of all sorts, call'd by the Greeks Monostrophic, or rather Apolelymenon, without regard had to Strophe, Antistrophe, or Epod, which were a kind of stanzas fram'd only for the music, then us'd with the chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into stanzas or pauses, they may be call'd Allæostropha. Division into act and scene referring chiefly to the stage (to which this Work never was intended) is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produc'd beyond the fifth act. Of the stile and uniformity, and that commonly call'd the plot, whether intricate or explicit, which is nothing indeed but such œconomy, or disposition of the fable as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum; they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the three tragic poets unequal'd yet by any, and the best rule to all who endevor to write tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is according to ancient rule, and best example, within the space of twenty-four hours.

The Persons.

SAMSON.
MANOAH, the Father of Samſon.
DALILA, his Wife.
HARAPHA of Gath.
Public Officer.
Meſſenger.
Chorus of Danites.

The SCENE *before the priſon in Gaza.*

SAMSON AGONISTES.

The Argument.

Samſon made captive, blind, and now in the priſon at Gaza, there to labor as in a common workhouſe, on a feſtival day, in the general ceſſation from labor, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, ſomewhat retir'd, there to ſit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be viſited by certain friends and equals of his Tribe, which make the Chorus, who ſeek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endevors the like, and withal tells him his purpoſe to procure his liberty by ranſom; laſtly, that this feaſt was proclam'd by the Philiſtines as a day of thankſgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samſon, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to proſecute his endevor with the Philiſtine lords for Samſon's redemption; who in the mean while is viſited by other perſons; and laſtly by a public officer to require his coming to the feaſt before the lords and people, to play or ſhow his ſtrength in their preſence; he at firſt refuſes, diſmiſſing the public officer with abſolute denial to come; at length perſuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the ſecond time with great threatnings to fetch him: the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his ſon's deliverance: in the midſt of which diſcourſe an Hebrew comes in haſte, confuſedly at firſt, and afterward more diſtinctly relating the cataſtrophe, what Samſon had done to the Philiſtines, and by accident to himſelf; wherewith the tragedy ends.

SAMSON.

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of ſun or ſhade:
There I am wont to ſit, when any chance
Relieves me from my taſk of ſervile toil,
Daily in the common priſon elſe injoin'd me,
Where I a priſoner chain'd, ſcarce freely draw

The air impriſon'd alſo, cloſe and damp,
Unwholeſome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heav'n freſh blowing, pure and ſweet,
With day-ſpring born; here leave me to reſpire.
This day a ſolemn feaſt the people hold
To Dagon their ſea-idol, and forbid
Laborious works; unwillingly this reſt
Their ſuperſtition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noiſe, I ſeek
This unfrequented place to find ſome eaſe,
Eaſe to the body ſome, none to the mind
From reſtleſs thoughts, that like a deadly ſwarm
Of hornets arm'd, no ſooner found alone,
But ruſh upon me thronging, and preſent
Times paſt, what once I was, and what am now.
O wherefore was my birth from Heav'n foretold
Twice by an angel, who at laſt in ſight
Of both my parents all in flames aſcended
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His godlike preſence, and from ſome great act
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding order'd and preſcrib'd
As of a perſon ſeparate to God,
Deſign'd for great exploits; if I muſt die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the ſcorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under taſk

With this Heav'n-gifted ſtrength? O glorious ſtrength
Put to the labor of a beaſt, debas'd
Lower than bond-ſlave! Promiſe was that I
Should Iſrael from Philiſtian yoke deliver;
Aſk for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeleſs in Gaza at the mill with ſlaves,
Himſelf in bonds under Philiſtian yoke:
Yet ſtay, let me not raſhly call in doubt
Divine prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myſelf?
Who this high gift of ſtrength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how eaſily bereft me,
Under the ſeal of Silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman muſt reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears.
O impotence of mind, in body ſtrong!
But what is ſtrength without a double ſhare
Of wiſdom, vaſt, unwieldy, burdenſome,
Proudly ſecure, yet liable to fall
By weakeſt ſubtleties, not made to rule,
But to ſubſerve where Wiſdom bears command!
God, when he gave me ſtrength, to ſhow withal
How ſlight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace, I muſt not quarrel with the will
Of higheſt diſpenſation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know:
Suffices that to me ſtrength is my bane,

And proves the ſource of all my miſeries;
So many, and ſo huge, that each apart
Would aſk a life to wail, but chief of all,
O loſs of Sight, of thee I moſt complain!
Blind among enemies, O worſe than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light the prime work of God to me' is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferior to the vileſt now become
Of man or worm; the vileſt here excel me,
They creep, yet ſee, I dark in light expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuſe, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, ſtill as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I ſeem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipſe
Without all hope of day!
O firſt created Beam, and thou great Word,
Let there be Light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The ſun to me is dark
And ſilent as the moon,
When ſhe deſerts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light ſo neceſſary is to life,
And almoſt life itſelf, if it be true

That light is in the ſoul,
She all in every part; why was the ſight
To ſuch a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and ſo eaſy to be quench'd?
And not as feeling through all parts diffus'd,
That ſhe might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
As in the land of Darkneſs yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but O yet more miſerable!
Myſelf my ſepulchre, a moving grave,
Bury'd, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worſt of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miſeries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are theſe? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet ſteering this way;
Perhaps my enemies who come to ſtare
At my affliction, and perhaps to' inſult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.
CHOR. This, this is he; ſoftly a while,
Let us not break in upon him;
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, careleſly diffus'd,
With languiſh'd head unpropt,

As one paſt hope, abandon'd,
And by himſelf giv'n over;
In ſlaviſh habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er-worn and ſoil'd;
Or do my eyes miſrepreſent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irreſiſtible Samſon? whom unarm'd
No ſtrength of man, or fierceſt wild beaſt could with-
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid, [ſtand;
Ran on imbattel'd armies clad in iron,
And weaponleſs himſelf,
Made arms ridiculous, uſeleſs the forgery
Of brazen ſhield and ſpear, the hammer'd cuiraſs,
Chalybean temper'd ſteel, and frock of mail
Adamantean proof;
But ſafeſt he who ſtood aloof,
When inſupportably his foot advanc'd,
In ſcorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Aſcalonite
Fled from his lion ramp, old warriors turn'd
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or grov'ling ſoil'd their creſted helmets in the duſt.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The jaw of a dead aſs, his ſword of bone,
A thouſand fore-ſkins fell, the flower of Paleſtine,
In Ramath-lechi famous to this day.
Then by main force pull'd up, and on his ſhoulders
The gates of Azza, poſt, and maſſy bar, [bore

Up to the hill by Hebron, ſeat of giants old,
No journey of a Sabbath-day, and loaded ſo;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heav'n.
Which ſhall I firſt bewail,
Thy bondage or loſt ſight,
Priſon within priſon
Inſeparably dark?
Thou art become (O worſt impriſonment!)
The dungeon of thyſelf; thy ſoul
(Which men enjoying ſight oft without cauſe com-
Impriſon'd now indeed, [plain)
In real darkneſs of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
To' incorporate with gloomy Night;
For inward light, alas!
Puts forth no viſual beam.
O mirror of our fickle ſtate,
Since man on earth unparallel'd!
The rarer thy example ſtands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongeſt of mortal men,
To loweſt pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
For him I reckon not in high eſtate
Whom long deſcent of birth
Or the ſphere of fortune raiſes;
But thee whoſe ſtrength, while Virtue was her mate,
Might have ſubdued the earth,
Univerſally crown'd with higheſt praiſes.

SAM. I hear the ſound of words, their ſenſe the air
Diſſolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

CHOR. He ſpeaks, let us draw nigh. Matchleſs in might,
The glory late of Iſrael, now the grief;
We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown
From Eſhtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
To viſit or bewail thee, or if better,
Counſel or conſolation we may bring,
Salve to thy ſores; apt words have power to ſwage
The tumors of a troubled mind,
And are as balm to feſter'd wounds.

SAM. Your coming, Friends, revives me, for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their ſuperſcription, (of the moſt
I would be underſtood) in proſp'rous days
They ſwarm, but in adverſe withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though ſought. Ye ſee, O Friends,
How many evils have incloſ'd me round;
Yet that which was the worſt now leaſt afflicts me,
Blindneſs, for had I ſight, confus'd with ſhame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who like a fooliſh pilot have ſhipwrack'd
My veſſel truſted to me from above,
Glorioſly rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have divulg'd the ſecret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? tell me, Friends,
Am I not ſung and proverb'd for a fool

In every ſtreet? do they not ſay, How well
Are come upon him his deſerts? yet why?
Immeaſurable ſtrength they might behold
In me, of wiſdom nothing more than mean;
This with the other ſhould, at leaſt, have pair'd,
Theſe two proportion'd ill drove me tranſverſe.
CHOR. Tax not divine diſpoſal; wiſeſt men
Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd;
And ſhall again, pretend they ne'er ſo wiſe.
Deject not then ſo overmuch thyſelf,
Who haſt of ſorrow thy full load beſides;
Yet truth to ſay, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou ſhouldſt wed Philiſtian women rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At leaſt of thy own nation, and as noble.
SAM. The firſt I ſaw at Timna, and ſhe pleas'd
Me, not my parents, that I ſought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulſe, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on; that by occaſion hence
I might begin Iſrael's deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving falſe, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had! fond wiſh too late)
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That ſpecious monſter, my accompliſh'd ſnare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,

And the ſame end; ſtill watching to oppreſs
Iſrael's oppreſſors: of what now I ſuffer
She was not the prime cauſe, but I myſelf,
Who vanquiſh'd with a peal of words (O weakneſs!)
Gave up my fort of ſilence to a woman.

CHOR. In ſeeking juſt occaſion to provoke
The Philiſtine, thy country's enemy,
Thou never waſt remiſs, I bear thee witneſs:
Yet Iſraël ſtill ſerves with all his ſons.

SAM. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Iſrael's governors, and heads of tribes,
Who ſeeing thoſe great acts, which God had done
Singly by me againſt their conquerors,
Acknowledg'd not, or not at all conſider'd
Deliverance offer'd: I on th' other ſide
Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds,
The deeds themſelves, though mute, ſpoke loud the
But they perſiſted deaf, and would not ſeem [doer;
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords the Philiſtines with gather'd powers
Enter'd Judea ſeeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of Etham was retir'd,
Not flying, but fore-caſting in what place
To ſet upon them, what advantag'd beſt:
Mean while the men of Judah, to prevent
The harraſs of their land, beſet me round;
I willingly on ſome conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me

To the uncircumcis'd a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threds
Touch'd with the flame: on their whole hoſt I flew
Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
Their choiceſt youth; they only liv'd who fled.
Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe,
They had by this poſſeſs'd the towers of Gath,
And lorded over them whom they now ſerve:
But what more oft in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to ſervitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with eaſe than ſtrenuous liberty;
And to deſpiſe, or envy, or ſuſpect
Whom God hath of his ſpecial favor rais'd
As their deliverer; if he ought begin,
How frequent to deſert him, and at laſt
To heap ingratitude on worthieſt deeds?
CHOR. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemn'd,
The matchleſs Gideon in purſuit
Of Madian and her vanquiſh'd kings:
And how ingrateful Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
Not worſe than by his ſhield and ſpear,
Defended Iſrael from the Ammonite,
Had not his proweſs quell'd their pride
In that ſore battel, when ſo many dy'd

Without reprieve adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.
SAM. Of ſuch examples add me to the roll,
Me eaſily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not ſo.
CHOR. Juſt are the ways of God,
And juſtifiable to men;
Unleſs there be who think not God at all:
If any be, they walk obſcure;
For of ſuch doctrin never was there ſchool,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himſelf.
Yet more there be who doubt his ways not juſt,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,
Regardleſs of his glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involv'd
They ravel more, ſtill leſs reſolv'd,
But never find ſelf-ſatisfying ſolution.
As if they would confine th' Interminable,
And tie him to his own preſcript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himſelf,
And hath full right to' exempt
Whom ſo it pleaſes him by choice
From national obſtriction, without taint
Of ſin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can beſt diſpenſe.
He would not elſe who never wanted means,

Nor in reſpect of th' enemy juſt cauſe
To ſet his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Againſt his vow of ſtricteſt purity,
To ſeek in marriage that fallacious bride,
Unclean, unchaſte.
Down Reaſon then, at leaſt vain reaſonings down,
Though Reaſon here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaſte was ſubſequent, her ſtain not his.
But ſee here comes thy reverend ſire
With careful ſtep, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: adviſe
Forthwith how thou ought'ſt to receive him.
SAM. Ay me, another inward grief awak'd
With mention of that name renews th' aſſault.
MAN. Brethren and men of Dan, for ſuch ye ſeem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old reſpect,
As I ſuppoſe, tow'ards your once glory'd friend
My ſon now captivate, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine caſt back with age
Came lagging after; ſay if he be here.
CHOR. As ſignal now in low dejected ſtate,
As erſt in high'eſt, behold him where he lies.
MAN. O miſerable change! is this the man
That invincible Samſon, far renown'd,
The dread of Iſrael's foes, who with a ſtrength
Equivalent to angels walk'd their ſtreets,

None offering fight; who ſingle combatant
Duel'd their armies rank'd in proud array,
Himſelf an army, now unequal match
To ſave himſelf againſt a coward arm'd
At one ſpear's length. O ever-failing truſt
In mortal ſtrength! and oh what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenneſs
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a ſon,
And ſuch a ſon as all men hail'd me happy;
Who would be now a father in my ſtead?
O wherefore did God grant me my requeſt,
And as a bleſſing with ſuch pomp adorn'd?
Why are his gifts deſirable, to tempt
Our earneſt pray'rs, then giv'n with ſolemn hand
As graces draw a ſcorpion's tail behind?
For this did th'angel twice deſcend? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and ſacred, glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in an hour
Inſnar'd, aſſaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy foes' deriſion, captive, poor and blind,
Into a dungeon thruſt, to work with ſlaves?
Alas me thinks whom God hath choſen once
To worthieſt deeds, if he through frailty err,
He ſhould not ſo o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to ſo foul indignities

Be' it but for honor's ſake of former deeds.
SAM. Appoint not heav'nly diſpoſition, Father;
Nothing of all theſe evils hath befall'n me
But juſtly; I myſelf have brought them on,
Sole author I, ſole cauſe: if ought ſeem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who' have profan'd
The myſtery of God giv'n me under pledge
Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithleſs enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all ſurpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience: did not ſhe
Of Timna firſt betray me, and reveal
The ſecret wreſted from me in her highth
Of nuptial love profeſs'd, carrying it ſtrait
To them who had corrupted her, my ſpies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who alſo in her prime of love,
Spouſal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offer'd only, by the ſent conceiv'd
Her ſpurious firſt-born, treaſon againſt me?
Thrice ſhe aſſay'd with flattering pray'rs and ſighs,
And amorous reproaches, to win from me
My capital ſecret, in what part my ſtrength
Lay ſtor'd, in what part ſumm'd, that ſhe might know;
Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to ſport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worſe

Than undiſſembled hate) with what contempt
She ſought to make me traitor to myſelf;
Yet the fourth time, when muſt'ring all her wiles,
With blandiſh parlies, femenine aſſaults,
Tongue-batteries, ſhe ſurceas'd not day nor night
To ſtorm me over-watch'd, and weary'd out,
At times when men ſeek moſt repoſe and reſt,
I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
Who with a grain of manhood well reſolv'd
Might eaſily have ſhook off all her ſnares:
But foul effeminacy held me yok'd
Her bond-ſlave; O indignity, O blot
To honor and religion! ſervile mind
Rewarded well with ſervile puniſhment!
The baſe degree to which I now am fall'n,
Theſe rags, this grinding is not yet ſo baſe
As was my former ſervitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True ſlavery, and that blindneſs worſe than this,
That ſaw not how degenerately I ſerv'd.
    MAN. I cannot praiſe thy marriage choices, Son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didſt plead
Divine impulſion prompting how thou might'ſt
Find ſome occaſion to infeſt our foes.
I ſtate not that; this I am ſure, our foes
Found ſoon occaſion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the ſooner
Temptation found'ſt, or over-potent charms

To violate the facred truft of Silence
Depofited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit was in thy power: true; and thou bear'ft
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
Bitterly haft thou paid, and ftill art paying
That rigid fcore. A worfe thing yet remains,
This day the Philiftines a popular feaft
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclame
Great pomp, and facrifice, and praifes loud
To Dagon, as their god who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samfon, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who flew'ft them many a flain.
So Dagon fhall be magnify'd, and God,
Befides whom is no god, compar'd with idols
Difglorify'd, blafphem'd, and had in fcorn
By the idolatrous rout amidft their wine;
Which to have come to pafs by means of thee,
Samfon, of all thy fufferings think the heavieft,
Of all reproach the moft with fhame that ever
Could have befall'n thee and thy father's houfe.

SAM. Father, I do acknowledge and confefs
That I this honor, I this pomp have brought
To Dagon, and advanc'd his praifes high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Difhonor, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
Of idolifts, and atheifts; have brought fcandal
To Ifrael, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propenfe enough before

To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
Which is my chief affliction, ſhame and ſorrow,
The anguiſh of my ſoul, that ſuffers not
Mine eye to harbour ſleep, or thoughts to reſt.
This only hope relieves me, that the ſtrife
With me hath end; all the conteſt is now
'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath preſum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter liſts with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be ſure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd,
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:
Dagon muſt ſtoop, and ſhall ere long receive
Such a diſcomfit, as ſhall quite deſpoil him
Of all theſe boaſted trophies won on me,
And with confuſion blank his worſhippers.

MAN. With cauſe this hope relieves thee, and theſe
I as a prophecy receive; for God, [words
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name
Againſt all competition, nor will long
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what ſhall be done?
Thou muſt not in the mean while here forgot
Lie in this miſerable loathſome plight
Neglected. I already have made way
To ſome Philiſtian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ranſome: well they may by this

Have satisfy'd their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

SAM. Spare that proposal, Father, spare the trouble
Of that solicitation; let me here
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How hainous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front?
But I God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully: a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

MAN. Be penitent and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, Son:
Repent the sin, but if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;
Or th' execution leave to high dispofal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself; perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves and more accepts;
(Best pleas'd with humble' and filial submission)

Him who imploring mercy ſues for life,
Than who ſelf-rigorous chuſes death as due;
Which argues over-juſt, and ſelf-diſpleas'd
For ſelf-offenſe, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offer'd means; who knows
But God hath ſet before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his ſacred houſe,
Where thou may'ſt bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with pray'rs and vows renew'd?
SAM. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end ſhould I ſeek it? when in ſtrength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine inſtinct, after ſome proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The ſons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearleſs of danger, like a petty god
I walk'd about admir'd of all and dreaded
On hoſtile ground, none daring my affront.
Then ſwoll'n with pride into the ſnare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Soften'd with pleaſure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my ſtrength in the laſcivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who ſhore me
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, deſpoil'd,

Shav'n, and diſarm'd among mine enemies.
CHOR. Deſire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldſt repreſs, nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavor, or the ſmell,
Or taſte that cheers the heart of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool cryſtallin ſtream.
SAM. Wherever fountain or freſh current flow'd
Againſt the eaſtern ray, tranſlucent, pure
With touch ethereal of Heav'n's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirſt, and refreſh'd; nor envy'd them the grape
Whoſe heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.
CHOR. O madneſs, to think uſe of ſtrongeſt wines
And ſtrongeſt drinks our chief ſupport of health,
When God with theſe forbidd'n made choice to rear
His mighty champion, ſtrong above compare,
Whoſe drink was only from the liquid brook.
SAM. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not com-
Againſt another object more inticing? [plete
What boots it at one gate to make defenſe,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquiſh'd? by which means,
Now blind, diſhearten'd, ſham'd, diſhonor'd, quell'd,
To what can I be uſeful, wherein ſerve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to ſit idle on the houſhold hearth,
A burd'nous drone; to viſitants a gaze,

Or pity'd object, theſe redundant locks
Robuſtious to no purpoſe cluſtring down,
Vain monument of ſtrength; till length of years
And ſedentary numneſs craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obſcure?
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of ſervile food
Conſume me, and oft-invoked death
Haſten the welcome end of all my pains.

MAN. Wilt thou then ſerve the Philiſtines with that
Which was expreſly giv'n thee to annoy them? [gift
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age outworn.
But God who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to ſpring, thy thirſt to' allay
After the brunt of battel, can as eaſy
Cauſe light again within thy eyes to ſpring,
Wherewith to ſerve him better than thou haſt;
And I perſuade me ſo; why elſe this ſtrength
Miraculous yet remaining in thoſe locks?
His might continues in thee not for nought,
Nor ſhall his wondrous gifts be fruſtrate thus.

SAM. All otherwiſe to me my thoughts portend,
That theſe dark orbs no more ſhall treat with light,
Nor th' other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkneſs nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial ſpirits droop,
My hopes all flat, Nature within me ſeems

In all her functions weary of herſelf,
My race of glory run, and race of ſhame,
And I ſhall ſhortly be with them that reſt.

MAN. Believe not theſe ſuggeſtions which proceed
From anguiſh of the mind and humors black,
That mingle with thy fancy. I however
Muſt not omit a father's timely care
To proſecute the means of thy deliverance
By ranſome, or how elſe: mean while be calm,
And healing words from theſe thy friends admit.

SAM. O that Torment ſhould not be confin'd
To the body's wounds and ſores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breaſt and reins;
But muſt ſecret paſſage find
To th' inmoſt Mind,
There exerciſe all his fierce accidents,
And on her pureſt ſpirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With anſwerable pains, but more intenſe,
Though void of corporal ſenſe.
My griefs not only pain me
As a lingring diſeaſe,
But finding no redreſs, ferment and rage,
Nor leſs than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and feſter, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts my tormentors arm'd with deadly ſtings

Mangle my apprehenſive tendereſt parts,
Exaſperate, exulcerate, and raiſe
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can aſſwage,
Nor breath of vernal air from ſnowy Alp.
Sleep hath forſook and given me o'er
To death's benumming opium as my only cure:
Thence faintings, ſwoonings of deſpair,
And ſenſe of Heav'n's deſertion.
  I was his nurſling once and choice delight,
His deſtin'd from the womb,
Promis'd by heav'nly meſſage twice deſcending.
Under his ſpecial eye
Abſtemious I grew up and thriv'd amain;
He led me on to mightieſt deeds
Above the nerve of mortal arm
Againſt th' uncircumcis'd, our enemies:
But now hath caſt me off as never known,
And to thoſe cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpleſs with th' irreparable loſs
Of ſight, reſerv'd alive to be repeated
The ſubject of their cruelty or ſcorn.
Nor am I in the liſt of them that hope;
Hopeleſs are all my evils, all remedileſs;
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, ſpeedy death,
The cloſe of all my miſeries, and the balm.

CHOR. Many are the ſayings of the wiſe
In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
Extolling patience as the trueſt fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Conſolitaries writ
With ſtudy'd argument, and much perſuaſion ſought
Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
But with th' afflicted in his pangs their ſound
Little prevails, or rather ſeems a tune
Harſh, and of diſſonant mood from his complaint;
Unleſs he feel within
Some ſource of conſolation from above,
Secret refreſhings, that repair his ſtrength,
And fainting ſpirits uphold.
God of our fathers, what is man!
That thou tow'ards him with hand ſo various,
Or might I ſay contrarious,
Temper'ſt thy providence through his ſhort courſe,
Not ev'nly, as thou rul'ſt
Th' angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute?
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wand'ring looſe about
Grow up and periſh, as the ſummer flie,
Heads without name no more remember'd,
But ſuch as thou haſt ſolemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd

To ſome great work, thy glory,
And people's ſafety, which in part they' effect:
Yet toward theſe thus dignify'd, thou oft
Amidſt their highth of noon
Changeſt thy count'nance, and thy hand with no regard
Of higheſt favors paſt
From thee on them, or them to thee of ſervice.
  Nor only doſt degrade them, or remit
To life obſcur'd, which were a fair diſmiſſion,
But throw'ſt them lower than thou didſt exalt them high,
Unſeemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the treſpaſs or omiſſion;
Oft leav'ſt them to the hoſtile ſword
Of Heathen and profane, their carcaſes
To dogs and fowls a prey, or elſe captiv'd;
Or to th' unjuſt tribunals, under change of times,
And condemnation of th' ungrateful multitude.
If theſe they 'ſcape, perhaps in poverty
With ſickneſs and diſeaſe thou bow'ſt them down,
Painful diſeaſes and deform'd,
In crude old age;
Though not diſordinate, yet cauſeleſs ſuff'ring
The puniſhment of diſſolute days: in fine,
Juſt or unjuſt alike ſeem miſerable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.
  So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy ſtrength, and mighty miniſter.
What do I beg? how haſt thou dealt already?

Behold him in this ſtate calamitous, and turn
His labors, for thou canſt, to peaceful end.
But who is this, what thing of ſea or land?
Female of ſex it ſeems,
That ſo bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way ſailing
Like a ſtately ſhip
Of Tarſus, bound for th' iles
Of Javan or Gadire
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd and ſtreamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
An amber ſent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damſel train behind;
Some rich Philiſtian matron ſhe may ſeem,
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy wife.
SAM. My wife, my traitreſs, let her not come near me.
CHOR. Yet on ſhe moves, now ſtands and eyes thee
About t'have ſpoke, but now, with head declin'd [fix'd,
Like a fair flower ſurcharg'd with dew, ſhe weeps,
And words addreſs'd ſeem into tears diſſolv'd,
Wetting the borders of her ſilken veil:
But now again ſhe makes addreſs to ſpeak.
DAL. With doubtful feet and wavering reſolution
I came, ſtill dreading thy diſpleaſure, Samſon,
Which to have merited, without excuſe,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears

May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw)
My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
No way assur'd. But conjugal affection
Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If ought in my ability may serve
To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAM. Out, out hyæna; these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change,
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Intangled with a pois'nous bosom snake,

If not by quick deſtruction ſoon cut off
As I by thee, to ages an example.
DAL. Yet hear me, Samſon ; not that I endevor
To leſſen or extenuate my offenſe,
But that on th' other ſide if it be weigh'd
By' itſelf, with aggravations not ſurcharg'd,
Or elſe with juſt allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if poſſible, thy pardon find
The eaſier tow'ards me, or thy hatred leſs.
Firſt granting, as I do, it was a weakneſs
In me, but incident to all our ſex,
Curioſity, inquiſitive, importune
Of ſecrets, then with like infirmity
To publiſh them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakneſs alſo to make known
For importunity, that is for nought,
Wherein conſiſted all thy ſtrength and ſafety?
To what I did thou ſhowed'ſt me firſt the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and ſhould not:
Nor ſhould'ſt thou' have truſted that to woman's
Ere I to thee, thou to thyſelf waſt cruel. [frailty :
Let Weakneſs then with Weakneſs come to parle
So near related, or the ſame of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may cenſure thine
The gentler, if ſeverely thou exact not
More ſtrength from me than in thyſelf was found.
And what if love, which thou interpret'ſt hate,
The jealouſy of love, powerful of ſway

In human hearts, nor lefs in mind tow'ards thee,
Caus'd what I did? I faw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd left one day thou would'ft leave me
As her at Timna, fought by all means therefore
How to indear, and hold thee to me firmeft:
No better way I faw than by' impórtuning
To learn thy fecrets, get into my power
The key of ftrength and fafety: thou wilt fay,
Why then reveal'd? I was affur'd by thofe
Who tempted me, that nothing was defign'd
Againft thee but fafe cuftody and hold:
That made for me; I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprifes,
While I at home fat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy abfence in my widow'd bed;
Here I fhould ftill enjoy thee day and night
Mine and Love's prifoner, not the Philiftines,
Whole to myfelf, unhazarded abroad,
Fearlefs at home of partners in my love.
Thefe reafons in Love's law have paft for good,
Though fond and reafonlefs to fome perhaps;
And Love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
Yet always pity' or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not auftere
As thou art ftrong, inflexible as fteel.
If thou in ftrength all mortals doft exceed,
In uncompaffionate anger do not fo.

SAM. How cunningly the forcerefs difplays

Her own tranfgreffions, to upbraid me mine!
That malice not repentance brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou fay'ft, th' example,
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
I to myfelf was falfe ere thou to me;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou feeft
Impartial, felf-fevere, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy feeking, and much rather
Confefs it feign'd: weaknefs is thy excufe,
And I believe it, weaknefs to refift
Philiftian gold: if weaknefs may excufe,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Inceftuous, facrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickednefs is weaknefs: that plea therefore
With God or man will gain thee no remiffion.
But love conftrain'd thee; call it furious rage
To fatisfy thy luft: love feeks to' have love;
My love how could'ft thou hope, who took'ft the way
To raife in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I muft, by thee betray'd?
In vain thou ftriv'ft to cover fhame with fhame,
Or by evafions thy crime uncover'ft more.

DAL. Since thou determin'ft weaknefs for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what affaults I had, what fnares befides,
What fieges girt me round, ere I confented;
Which might have aw'd the beft refolv'd of men,

The conſtanteſt, to' have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'ſt,
That wrought with me: thou know'ſt the magiſtrates
And princes of my country came in perſon,
Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, preſs'd how juſt it was,
How honorable, how glorious to intrap
A common enemy, who had deſtroy'd
Such numbers of our nation: and the prieſt
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to inſnare an irreligious
Diſhonorer of Dagon: what had I
To' oppoſe againſt ſuch powerful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in ſilence all theſe reaſons
With hard conteſt: at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wiſeſt men, that to the public good
Private reſpects muſt yield, with grave authority
Took full poſſeſſion of me and prevail'd;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty ſo injoining.
SAM. I thought where all thy circling wiles would
In feign'd religion, ſmooth hypocriſy. [end;
But had thy love, ſtill odiouſly pretended,
Been, as it ought, ſincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reaſonings, brought forth other deeds.

I before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation choſe thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'ſt,
Too well, unboſom'd all my ſecrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-power'd
By thy requeſt, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Didſt thou at firſt receive me for thy huſband,
Then, as ſince then, thy country's foe profeſs'd?
Being once a wife, for me thou waſt to leave
Parents and country; nor was I their ſubject,
Nor under their protection but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs: if ought againſt my life
Thy country ſought of thee, it ſought unjuſtly,
Againſt the law of Nature, law of nations,
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conſpiring to uphold their ſtate
By worſe than hoſtile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name ſo dear;
Not therefore to be' obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;
To pleaſe thy gods thou didſt it; gods unable
To' acquit themſelves and proſecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity, gods cannot be;
Leſs therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd.
Theſe falſe pretexts and varniſh'd colors failing,
Bare in thy guilt how foul muſt thou appear?

DAL. In argument with men a woman ever

Goes by the worſe, whatever be her cauſe.
SAM. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witneſs when I was worried with thy peals.
DAL. I was a fool, too raſh, and quite miſtaken
In what I thought would have ſucceeded beſt.
Let me obtain forgiveneſs of thee, Samſon,
Afford me place to ſhow what recompenſe
Tow'ards thee I intend for what I have miſdone,
Miſguided; only what remains paſt cure
Bear not too ſenſibly, nor ſtill inſiſt
To' afflict thyſelf in vain: though ſight be loſt,
Life yet hath many ſolaces, enjoy'd
Where other ſenſes want not their delights
At home in leiſure and domeſtic eaſe,
Exempt from many a care and chance to which
Eye-ſight expoſes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favorable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathſome priſon-houſe, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nurſing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age
With all things grateful cheer'd, and ſo ſupply'd,
That what by me thou' haſt loſt thou leaſt ſhalt miſs.
SAM. No, no, of my condition take no care;
It fits not; thou and I long ſince are twain:
Nor think me ſo unwary or accurs'd,
To bring my feet again into the ſnare

Where once I have been caught; I know thy trains
Though dearly to my coſt, thy gins, and toils;
Thy fair inchanted cup, and warbling charms
No more on me have power, their force is null'd,
So much of adder's wiſdom I have learn'd
To fence my ear againſt thy ſorceries.
If in my flower of youth and ſtrength, when all men
Lov'd, honor'd, fear'd me, thou alone could'ſt hate me
Thy huſband, ſlight me, ſell me, and forego me;
How wouldſt thou uſe me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in moſt things as a child
Helpleſs, thence eaſily contemn'd, and ſcorn'd,
And laſt neglected? How wouldſt thou inſult,
When I muſt live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloſs upon, and cenſuring, frown or ſmile?
This jail I count the houſe of Liberty
To thine, whoſe doors my feet ſhall never enter.
DAL. Let me approach at leaſt, and touch thy hand.
SAM. Not for thy life, leſt fierce remembrance wake
My ſudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At diſtance I forgive thee, go with that;
Bewail thy falſhood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illuſtrious women, faithful wives:
Cheriſh thy haſten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treaſon: ſo farewel.

DAL. I ſee thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers than winds and ſeas, yet winds to ſeas
Are reconcil'd at length, and ſea to ſhore:
Thy anger, unappeaſable, ſtill rages,
Eternal tempeſt never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myſelf, and ſuing
For peace, reap nothing but repulſe and hate?
Bid go with evil omen and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?
To mix with thy concernments I deſiſt
Henceforth, nor too much diſapprove my own.
Fame if not double-fac'd is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blaſt proclames moſt deeds;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greateſt names in his wild aery flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all poſterity may ſtand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falſhood moſt unconjugal traduc'd.
But in my country where I moſt deſire,
In Ecron, Gaza, Aſdod, and in Gath,
I ſhall be nam'd among the famouſeſt
Of women, ſung at ſolemn feſtivals,
Living and dead recorded, who to ſave
Her country from a fierce deſtroyer, choſe
Above the faith of wedlock-bands, my tomb
With odors viſited and annual flowers;

Not leſs renown'd than in Mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhoſpitable guile
Smote Siſera ſleeping through the temples nail'd.
Nor ſhall I count it hainous to enjoy
The pnblic marks of honor and reward
Conferr'd upon me for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd to' have ſhown.
At this who ever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.
CHOR. She 's gone, a manifeſt ſerpent by her ſting
Diſcover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.
SAM. So let her go, God ſent her to debaſe me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To ſuch a viper his moſt ſacred truſt
Of ſecrecy, my ſafety, and my life.
CHOR. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath ſtrange [power,
After offenſe returning, to regain
Love once poſſeſs'd, nor can be eaſily
Repuls'd, without much inward paſſion felt
And ſecret ſting of amorous remorſe.
SAM. Love-quarrels oft in pleaſing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery indang'ring life.
CHOR. It is not virtue, wiſdom, valor, wit,
Strength, comelineſs of ſhape, or ampleſt merit
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to ſay,
Harder to hit,
(Which way ſoever men refer it)

Much like thy riddle, Samſon, in one day
Or ſev'n, though one ſhould muſing ſit.
  If any of theſe or all, the Timnian bride
Had not ſo ſoon preferr'd
Thy paranymph, worthleſs to thee compar'd,
Succeſſor in thy bed
Nor both ſo looſly diſally'd
Their nuptials, nor this laſt ſo treacherouſly
Had ſhorn the fatal harveſt of thy head.
Is it for that ſuch outward ornament
Was laviſh'd on their ſex, that inward gifts
Were left for haſte unfiniſh'd, judgment ſcant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is beſt
In choice, but ofteſt to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of ſelf-love mix'd,
Of conſtancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?
  Whate'er it be, to wiſeſt men and beſt
Seeming at firſt all heav'nly under virgin veil,
Soft, modeſt, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary ſhe proves, a thorn
Inteſtin, far within defenſive arms
A cleaving miſchief, in his way to virtue
Adverſe and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry inſlav'd
With dotage, and his ſenſe deprav'd
To folly' and ſhameful deeds which ruin ends.

What pilot ſo expert but needs muſt wreck
Imbark'd with ſuch a ſteers-mate at the helm?
Favor'd of Heav'n who finds
One virtuous rarely found,
That in domeſtic good combines:
Happy that houſe! his way to peace is ſmooth:
But virtue which breaks through all oppoſition,
And all temptation can remove,
Moſt ſhines and moſt is acceptable above.
Therefore God's univerſal law
Gave to the man deſpotic power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile ſhe or lour:
So ſhall he leaſt confuſion draw
On his whole life, not ſway'd
By female uſurpation, or diſmay'd.
But had we beſt retire, I ſee a ſtorm?
SAM. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
CHOR. But this another kind of tempeſt brings.
SAM. Be leſs abſtruſe, my riddling days are paſt.
CHOR. Look now for no inchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his ſtride,
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I leſs conjecture than when firſt I ſaw

The ſumptuous Dalila floting this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.
SAM. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.
CHOR. His fraught we ſoon ſhall know, he now arrives.
HAR. I come not Samſon, to condole thy chance,
As theſe perhaps, yet wiſh it had not been,
Though for no friendly' intent. I am of Gath,
Men call me Harapha, of ſtock renown'd
As Og or Anak and the Emims old
That Kiriathaim held, thou know'ſt me now
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd
Incredible to me, in this diſpleas'd,
That I was never preſent on the place
Of thoſe encounters, where we might have try'd
Each other's force in camp or liſted field;
And now am come to ſee of whom ſuch noiſe
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to ſurvey,
If thy appearance anſwer loud report.
SAM. The way to know were not to ſee but taſte.
HAR. Doſt thou already ſingle me? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that Fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd
To' have wrought ſuch wonders with an aſs's jaw;
I ſhould have forc'd thee ſoon with other arms,
Or left thy carcaſe where the aſs lay thrown:
So had the glory' of proweſs been recover'd
To Paleſtine, won by a Philiſtine,

From the unforeſkin'd race, of whom thou bear'ſt
The higheſt name for valiant acts; that honor
Certain to' have won by mortal duel from thee,
I loſe, prevented by thy eyes put out.
SAM. Boaſt not of what thou would'ſt have done, but
What then thou would'ſt, thou ſeeſt it in thy hand. [do
HAR. To combat with a blind man I diſdain,
And thou haſt need much waſhing to be touch'd.
SAM. Such uſage as your honorable lords
Afford me' aſſaſſinated and betray'd,
Who durſt not with their whole united powers
In fight withſtand me ſingle and unarm'd,
Nor in the houſe with chamber ambuſhes
Cloſe-banded durſt attack me, no not ſleeping
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me.
Therefore without feign'd ſhifts let be aſſign'd
Some narrow place inclos'd, where ſight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine of braſs, thy broad habergeon,
Vant-braſs and greves, and gauntlet, add thy ſpear,
A weaver's beam, and ſev'n-times-folded ſhield,
I only with an oaken ſtaff will meet thee,
And raiſe ſuch outcries on thy clatter'd iron,
Which long ſhall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Thou oft ſhall wiſh thyſelf at Gath to boaſt

Again in ſafety what thou would'ſt have done
To amſo n, but ſhalt never ſee Gath more.
HAR. Thou durſt not thus diſparage glorious arms,
Which greateſt heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and ſafety, had not ſpells
And black inchantments, ſome Magician's art,
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee ſtrong, which thou from
Feign'dſt that thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair, [Heav'n
Where ſtrength can leaſt abide, though all thy hairs
Where briſtles rang'd like thoſe that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.
SAM. I know no ſpells, uſe no forbidden arts;
My truſt is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this ſtrength, diffus'd
No leſs through all my ſinews, joints and bones,
Than thine, while I preſerv'd theſe locks unſhorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
Go to his temple, invocate his aid
With ſolemneſt devotion, ſpread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To fruſtrate and diſſolve theſe magic ſpells,
Which I to be the power of Iſrael's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the teſt,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With th' utmoſt of his godhead ſeconded:
Then thou ſhalt ſee, or rather to thy ſorrow
Soon feel, whoſe God is ſtrongeſt, thine or mine.

HAR. Preſume not on thy God, whate'er he be,
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd ſend thee
Into the common priſon there to grind
Among the ſlaves and aſſes thy comrádes,
As good for nothing elſe, no better ſervice
With thoſe thy boiſt'rous locks, no worthy match
For Valor to aſſail, nor by the ſword
Of noble warrior, ſo to ſtain his honor,
But by the barber's razor beſt ſubdued.

SAM. All theſe indignities, for ſuch they are
From thine, theſe evils I deſerve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Juſtly, yet deſpair not of his final pardon
Whoſe ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the ſuppliant:
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whoſe god is God,
Thine or whom I with Iſrael's ſons adore.

HAR. Fair honor that thou doſt thy God, in truſting
He will accept thee to defend his cauſe,
A murderer, a revolter, and a robber.

SAM. Tongue-doughty Giant, how doſt thou prove me

HAR. Is not thy nation ſubject to our lords? [theſe?
Their magiſtrates confeſs'd it, when they took thee

As a league-breaker and a deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadſt thou not committed
Notorious murder on thoſe thirty men
At Aſcalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber ſtripp'dſt them of their robes?
The Philiſtines, when thou hadſt broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only ſeeking,
To others did no violence nor ſpoil.

SAM. Among the daughters of the Philiſtines
I choſe a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feaſt:
But your ill-meaning politician lords
Under pretence of bridal friends and gueſts,
Appointed to await me thirty ſpies,
Who threatning cruel death conſtrain'd the bride
To wring from me and tell to them my ſecret,
That ſolv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all ſet on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,
I us'd hoſtility, and took their ſpoil
To pay my underminers in their coin,
My nation was ſubjected to your lords.
It was the force of conqueſt; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
But I a private perſon, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, preſum'd
Single rebellion and did hoſtile acts.
I was no private but a perſon rais'd

With ſtrength ſufficient and command from Heav'n
To free my country; if their ſervile minds
Me their deliverer ſent would not receive,
But to their maſters gave me up for nought,
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they ſerve.
I was to do my part from Heav'n aſſign'd,
And had perform'd it, if my known offenſe
Had not diſabled me, not all your force:
Theſe ſhifts refuted, anſwer thy appellant
Though by his blindneſs maim'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to ſingle fight,
As a petty enterpriſe of ſmall enforce.

HAR. With thee a man condemn'd, a ſlave inroll'd,
Due by the law to capital puniſhment?
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAM. Cam'ſt thou for this, vain Boaſter, to ſurvey me,
To deſcant on my ſtrength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer, part not hence ſo ſlight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand ſurvey not thee.

HAR. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unus'd
Hear theſe diſhonors, and not render death?

SAM. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fiſt is free.

HAR. This inſolence other kind of anſwer fits.

SAM. Go baffled Coward, leſt I run upon thee,
Though in theſe chains, bulk without ſpirit vaſt,
And with one buffet lay thy ſtructure low,

Or ſwing thee in the air, then daſh thee down
To th' hazard of thy brains and ſhatter'd ſides.
HAR. By Aſtaroth ere long thou ſhalt lament
Theſe braveries in irons loaden on thee.
CHOR. His Giantſhip is gone ſomewhat creſt-fall'n,
Stalking with leſs unconſcionable ſtrides,
And lower looks, but in a ſultry chaſe.
SAM. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood,
Though Fame divulge him father of five ſons,
All of gigantic ſize, Goliath chief.
CHOR. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counſel ſtir them up
Some way or other yet further to' afflict thee.
SAM. He muſt allege ſome cauſe, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, leſt a queſtion riſe
Whether he durſt accept th' offer or not,
And that he durſt not plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impoſe, nor I ſuſtain,
If they intend advantage of my labors,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no ſmall profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadlieſt foe will prove
My ſpeedieſt friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worſt that he can give, to me the beſt.
Yet ſo it may fall out, becauſe their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHOR. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
To the ſpirits of juſt men long oppreſs'd,
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, th'oppreſſor,
The brute and boiſt'rous force of violent men
Hardy and induſtrious to ſupport
Tyrannic power, but raging to purſue
The righteous and all ſuch as honor Truth;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats
With plain heroic magnitude of mind
And celeſtial vigor arm'd,
Their armories and magazines contemns,
Renders them uſeleſs, while
With winged expedition
Swift as the lightning glance he executes
His errand on the wicked, who ſurpris'd
Loſe their defenſe diſtracted and amaz'd.
  But patience is more oft the exerciſe
Of ſaints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That Tyranny or Fortune can inflict.
Either of theſe is in thy lot,
Samſon, with might indued
Above the ſons of men; but ſight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with thoſe

Whom patience finally muſt crown.
  This idol's day hath been to thee no day of reſt,
Laboring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,
For I deſcry this way
Some other tending, in his hand
A ſcepter or quaint ſtaff he bears,
Comes on amain, ſpeed in his look.
By his habit I diſcern him now
A public Officer, and now at hand.
His meſſage will be ſhort and voluble.
  OFF. Hebrews, the pris'ner Samſon here I ſeek.
  CHOR. His manacles remark him, there he ſits.
  OFF. Samſon, to thee our lords thus bid me ſay;
This day to Dagon is a ſolemn feaſt,
With ſacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;
Thy ſtrength they know ſurpaſſing human rate,
And now ſome public proof thereof require
To honor this great feaſt, and great aſſembly;
Riſe therefore with all ſpeed and come along,
Where I will ſee thee hearten'd and freſh clad
To' appear as fits before th' illuſtrious lords.
  SAM. Thou know'ſt I am an Hebrew, therefore tell [them
Our law forbids at their religious rites
My preſence; for that cauſe I cannot come.
  OFF. This anſwer, be aſſur'd, will not content them.
  SAM. Have they not ſword-players, and every ſort

Of gymnic artiſts, wreſtlers, riders, runners,
Juglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
But they muſt pick me out with ſhackles tir'd,
And over-labor'd at their public mill
To make them ſport with blind activity?
Do they not ſeek occaſion of new quarrels
On my refuſal to diſtreſs me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'ſt, I will not come.
OFF. Regard thyſelf, this will offend them highly.
SAM. Myſelf? my conſcience and internal peace.
Can they think me ſo broken, ſo debas'd
With corporal ſervitude, that my mind ever
Will condeſcend to ſuch abſurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jeſter,
And in my midſt of ſorrow and heart-grief
To ſhow them feats, and play before their god,
The worſt of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.
OFF. My meſſage was impos'd on me with ſpeed,
Brooks no delay: is this thy reſolution?
SAM. So take it with what ſpeed thy meſſage needs.
OFF. I am ſorry what this ſtoutneſs will produce.
SAM. Perhaps thou ſhalt have cauſe to ſorrow indeed.
CHOR. Conſider, Samſon; matters now are ſtrain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break;
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?

Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.
SAM. Shall I abuse this consecreated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair
After my great transgression, so requite
Favor renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols;
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honor to their Dagon?
Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane?
CHOR. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Phi-
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean. [listines,
SAM. Not in their idol-worship, but by labor
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power. [not.
CHOR. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile
SAM. Where outward force constrains, the sentence
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon, [holds.
Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind: which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me or thee
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

CHOR. How thou wilt here come off ſurmounts my reach.
SAM. Be of good courage, I begin to feel
Some rouſing motions in me which diſpoſe
To ſomething extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this meſſenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be ſure, that may diſhonor
Our law, or ſtain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be ought of preſage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By ſome great act, or of my days the laſt.
CHOR. In time thou haſt reſolv'd, the man returns.
OFF. Samſon, this ſecond meſſage from our lords
To thee I am bid ſay. Art thou our ſlave,
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
And dar'ſt thou at our ſending and command
Diſpute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we ſhall find ſuch engins to aſſail
And hamper thee, as thou ſhalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier faſten'd than a rock.
SAM. I could be well content to try their art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious.
Yet knowing their advantages too many,
Becauſe they ſhall not trail me through their ſtreets
Like a wild beaſt, I am content to go.
Maſters' commands come with a power reſiſtleſs
To ſuch as owe them abſolute ſubjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpoſe?
(So mutable are all the ways of men)

Yet this be ſure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our law.
 OFF. I praiſe thy reſolution: doff theſe links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favor, and perhaps to ſet thee free.
 SAM. Brethren farewel; your company along
I will not wiſh, leſt it perhaps offend them
To ſee me girt with friends; and how the ſight
Of me as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exaſperate them
I know not: lords are lordlieſt in their wine;
And the well-feaſted prieſt then ſooneſt fir'd
With zeal, if ought religion ſeem concern'd;
No leſs the people on their holy-days
Impetuous, inſolent, unquenchable:
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing diſhonorable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our law, my nation, or myſelf,
The laſt of me or no I cannot warrant.
 CHOR. Go, and the Holy One
Of Iſrael be thy guide
To what may ſerve his glory beſt, and ſpread his name
Great among the Heathen round;
Send thee the angel of thy birth, to ſtand
Faſt by thy ſide, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his meſſage told
Of thy conception, and be now a ſhield
Of fire; that Spirit that firſt ruſh'd on thee

In the camp of Dan
Be efficacious in thee now at need.
For never was from Heav'n imparted
Meaſure of ſtrength ſo great to mortal ſeed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been ſeen.
But wherefore comes old Manoah in ſuch haſte
With youthful ſteps? much livelier than ere while
He ſeems: ſuppoſing here to find his ſon,
Or of him bringing to us ſome glad news?

MAN. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at preſent here to find my ſon,
By order of the lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their feaſt.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock, I had no will,
Leſt I ſhould ſee him forc'd to things unſeemly.
But that which mov'd my coming now was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good ſucceſs to work his liberty.

CHOR. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; ſay, reverend Sire, we thirſt to hear.

MAN. I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high ſtreet paſſing,
With ſupplication prone and father's tears,
To' accept of ranſome for my ſon their pris'ner.
Some much averſe I found and wondrous harſh,
Contemptuous, proud, ſet on revenge and ſpite;
That part moſt reverenc'd Dagon and his prieſts:

Others more moderate ſeeming but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and ſtate
They eaſily would ſet to ſale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confeſs'd
They had enough reveng'd, having reduc'd
Their foe to miſery beneath their fears,
The reſt was magnanimity to remit,
If ſome convenient ranſome were propos'd.
What noiſe or ſhout was that? it tore the ſky.
CHOR. Doubtleſs the people ſhouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at ſome proof of ſtrength before them ſhown.
MAN. His ranſome, if my whole inheritance
May compaſs it, ſhall willingly be paid
And number'd down: much rather I ſhall chuſe
To live the pooreſt in my tribe, than richeſt,
And he in that calamitous priſon left.
No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit: not wanting him I ſhall want nothing.
CHOR. Fathers are wont to lay up for their ſons,
Thou for thy ſon art bent to lay out all:
Sons wont to nurſe their parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'ſt how to nurſe thy ſon
Made older than thy age through eye-ſight loſt.
MAN. It ſhall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him ſitting in the houſe, ennobled

With all thoſe high exploits by him achiev'd,
And on his ſhoulders waving down thoſe locks
That of a nation arm'd the ſtrength contain'd:
And I perſuade me God had not permitted
His ſtrength again to grow up with his hair
Garriſon'd round about him like a camp
Of faithful ſoldiery, were not his purpoſe
To uſe him further yet in ſome great ſervice,
Not to ſit idle with ſo great a gift
Uſeleſs, and thence ridiculous about him.
And ſince his ſtrength with eye-ſight was not loſt,
God will reſtore him eye-ſight to his ſtrength.
CHOR. Thy hopes are not ill founded nor ſeem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.
MAN. I know your friendly minds and——O what
Mercy of Heav'n, what hideous noiſe was that! [noiſe!
Horribly loud, unlike the former ſhout.
CHOR. Noiſe call you it or univerſal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation periſh'd!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noiſe,
Ruin, deſtruction at the utmoſt point.
MAN. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noiſe:
Oh it continues, they have ſlain my ſon.
CHOR. Thy ſon is rather ſlaying them, that outcry
From ſlaughter of one foe could not aſcend.
MAN. Some diſmal accident it needs muſt be;

What ſhall we do, ſtay here or run and ſee?
CHOR. Beſt keep together here, leſt running thither
We unawares run into Danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philiſtines is fall'n;
From whom could elſe a general cry be heard?
The ſufferers then will ſcarce moleſt us here,
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if his eye-ſight (for to Iſrael's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle reſtor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of ſlaughter'd walk his way?
MAN. That were a joy preſumptuous to be thought.
CHOR. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?
MAN. He can I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain ſubſcribe, and tempts belief.
A little ſtay will bring ſome notice hither.
CHOR. Of good or bad ſo great, of bad the ſooner;
For evil news rides poſt, while good news baits.
And to our wiſh I ſee one hither ſpeeding,
An Hebrew, as I gueſs, and of our tribe.
MES. O whither ſhall I run, or which way fly
The ſight of this ſo horrid ſpectacle,
Which erſt my eyes beheld and yet behold?
For dire Imagination ſtill purſues me.
But Providence or inſtinct of Nature ſeems,
Or Reaſon though diſturb'd, and ſcarce conſulted,
To' have guided me aright, I know not how,

To thee firſt reverend Manoah, and to theſe
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at ſome diſtance from the place of horror,
So in the ſad event too much concern'd.
MAN. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou ſeeſt we long to know.
MES. It would burſt forth, but I recover breath
And ſenſe diſtract, to know well what I utter.
MAN. Tell us the ſum, the circumſtance defer.
MES. Gaza yet ſtands, but all her ſons are fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.
MAN. Sad, but thou know'ſt to Iſraelites not ſaddeſt
The deſolation of a hoſtile city.
MES. Feed on that firſt, there may in grief be ſurfeit,
MAN. Relate by whom.
MES. By Samſon.
MAN. That ſtill leſſens
The ſorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
MES. Ah Manoah, I refrain too ſuddenly
To utter what will come at laſt too ſoon;
Leſt evil tidings with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear ſhould pierce too deep.
MAN. Suſpenſe in news is torture, ſpeak them out.
MES. Take then the worſt in brief, Samſon is dead.
MAN. The worſt indeed, O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but Death who ſets all free
Hath paid his ranſome now and full diſcharge.

What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the firſt-born bloom of Spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of Winter's froſt!
Yet ere I give the reins to Grief, ſay firſt,
How dy'd he; death to life is crown or ſhame.
All by him fell thou ſay'ſt, by whom fell he,
What glorious hand gave Samſon his death's wound?
MES. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
MAN. Wearied with ſlaughter then or how? explain.
MES. By his own hands.
MAN. Self-violence? what cauſe
Brought him ſo ſoon at variance with himſelf
Among his foes?
MES. Inevitable cauſe
At once both to deſtroy and be deſtroy'd;
The edifice, where all were met to ſee him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.
MAN. O laſtly over-ſtrong againſt thyſelf!
A dreadful way thou took'ſt to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confuſion, give us if thou canſt,
Eye-witneſs of what firſt or laſt was done,
Relation more particular and diſtinct.
MES. Occaſions drew me early to this city,
And as the gates I enter'd with ſun-riſe,
The morning trumpets feſtival proclam'd
Through each high-ſtreet: little I had diſpatch'd,

When all abroad was rumor'd that this day
Samſon ſhould be brought forth, to ſhow the people
Proof of his mighty ſtrength in feats and games;
I ſorrow'd at his captive ſtate, but minded
Not to be abſent at that ſpectacle.
The building was a ſpacious theatre
Half-round on two main pillars vaulted high,
With ſeats where all the lords and each degree
Of ſort might ſit in order to behold;
The other ſide was open, where the throng
On banks and ſcaffolds under ſky might ſtand;
I among theſe aloof obſcurely ſtood.
The feaſt and noon grew high, and ſacrifice [wine,
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and
When to their ſports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samſon as a public ſervant brought,
In their ſtate livery clad; before him pipes
And timbrels, on each ſide went armed guards,
Both horſe and foot, before him and behind
Archers, and ſlingers, cataphracts and ſpears.
At ſight of him the people with a ſhout
Rifted the air, clamoring their god with praiſe,
Who' had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient but undaunted where they led him,
Came to the place, and what was ſet before him,
Which without help of eye might be aſſay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he ſtill perform'd
All with incredible, ſtupendous force,

None daring to appear antagoniſt.
At length for intermiſſion ſake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requeſted
(For ſo from ſuch as nearer ſtood we heard)
As over-tir'd to let him lean a while
With both his arms on thoſe two maſſy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main ſupport.
He unſuſpicious led him; which when Samſon
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,
And eyes faſt fix'd he ſtood, as one who pray'd,
Or ſome great matter in his mind revolv'd:
At laſt with head erect thus cry'd aloud,
Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reaſon was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now of my own accord ſuch other trial
I mean to ſhow you of my ſtrength, yet greater;
As with amaze ſhall ſtrike all who behold.
This utter'd, ſtraining all his nerves he bow'd,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, thoſe two maſſy pillars
With horrible convulſion to and fro
He tugg'd, he ſhook, till down they came and drew
The whole roof after them, with burſt of thunder
Upon the heads of all who ſat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counſellors, or prieſts,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philiſtian city round,

Met from all parts to folemnize this feaft.
Samfon with thefe immix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the fame deftruction on himfelf;
The vulgar only fcap'd who ftood without.
  CHOR. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou haft fulfill'd
The work for which thou waft foretold
To Ifrael, and now ly'ft victorious
Among thy flain felf-kill'd
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire Neceffity, whofe law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy flaughter'd foes in number more
Than all thy life hath flain before.
  I SEMICHOR. While their hearts were jocund and fublime,
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
Chaunting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In Silo his bright fanctuary:
Among them he a fpi'rit of Phrenzy fent,
Who hurt their minds,
And urg'd them on with mad defire
To call in hafte for their deftroyer;
They only fet on fport and play
Unweetingly importun'd
Their own deftruction to come fpeedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men
Fall'n into wrath divine,

As their own ruin on themſelves to' invite,
Inſenſate left, or to ſenſe reprobate,
And with blindneſs internal ſtruck.

2 SEMICHOR. But he though blind of ſight,
Deſpis'd and thought extinguiſh'd quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue rous'd
From under aſhes into ſudden flame,
And as an evening dragon came,
Aſſailant on the perched rooſts,
And neſts in order rang'd
Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle
His cloudleſs thunder bolted on their heads.
So Virtue giv'n for loſt,
Depreſs'd, and overthrown, as ſeem'd,
Like that ſelf-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods imboſt,
That no ſecond knows nor third,
And lay ere while a holocauſt,
From out her aſhy womb now teem'd,
Revives, refloriſhes, then vigorous moſt
When moſt unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame ſurvives
A ſecular bird ages of lives.

MAN. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cauſe; Samſon hath quit himſelf
Like Samſon, and heroicly hath finiſh'd
A life heroic, on his enemies

Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the ſons of Caphtor
Through all Philiſtian bounds, to Iſrael
Honor hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occaſion;
To' himſelf and father's houſe eternal fame;
And which is beſt and happieſt yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
But favoring and aſſiſting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breaſt, no weakneſs, no contempt,
Diſpraiſe, or blame, nothing but well and fair
And what may quiet us in a death ſo noble.
Let us go find the body where it lies
Sok'd in his enemies' blood, and from the ſtream
With lavers pure and cleanſing herbs waſh off
The clotted gore. I with what ſpeed the while
(Gaza is not in plight to ſay us nay)
Will ſend for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and ſolemnly attend
With ſilent obſequy and funeral train
Home to his father's houſe: there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with ſhade
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
In copious legend, or ſweet lyric ſong.
Thither ſhall all the valiant youth reſort,
And from his memory inflame their breaſts

To matchleſs valor, and adventures high:
The virgins alſo ſhall on feaſtful days
Viſit his tomb with flow'rs, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loſs of eyes.
CHOR. All is beſt, though we oft doubt
What th' unſearchable diſpoſe
Of higheſt Wiſdom brings about,
And ever beſt found in the cloſe.
Oft he ſeems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witneſs glorioufly; whence Gaza mourns
And all that band them to reſiſt
His uncontrollable intent;
His ſervants he with new acquiſt
Of true experience from this great event
With peace and conſolation hath diſmiſt,
And calm of mind all paſſion ſpent.

The End of Samſon Agoniſtes.

COMUS, A MASK.

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW-CASTLE, M.DC.XXXIV, BEFORE THE EARL OF BRIDGEWATER, THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus austrum
Perditus-------

To the Right Honourable

JOHN LORD VISCOUNT BRACKLY,

Son and Heir apparent to the Earl of Bridgewater, *&c.*

My Lord,

THIS Poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honor from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledg'd by the Author, yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely, and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view; and now to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair hopes, and rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honor of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him who hath by many favors been long obliged to your most honored parents, and as in this representation your attendent Thyrsis, so now in all real expression,

Your faithful and most humble servant,

H. LAWES.

The Persons.

The attendent SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of Thyrſis.
COMUS with his crew.
The LADY.
Firſt BROTHER.
Second BROTHER.
SABRINA the Nymph.

The chief perſons who preſented were,

The Lord BRACKLY.
Mr. THOMAS EGERTON, his brother.
The Lady ALICE EGERTON.

COMUS.

The firſt SCENE diſcovers a wild wood.

The attendent SPIRIT *deſcends or enters.*

BEFORE the ſtarry threſhold of Jove's court
My manſion is, where thoſe immortal ſhapes
Of bright aerial ſpirits live inſpher'd
In regions mild of calm and ſerene air,
Above the ſmoke and ſtir of this dim ſpot,
Which men call Earth, and with low thoughted care
Confin'd, and peſter'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feveriſh being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives
After this mortal change to her true ſervants
Amongſt the enthron'd gods on ſainted ſeats.
Yet ſome there be that by due ſteps aſpire
To lay their juſt hands on that golden key
That opes the palace of Eternity:
To ſuch my errand is; and but for ſuch,
I would not ſoil theſe pure ambroſial weeds
With the rank vapors of this ſin-worn mold.
But to my taſk. Neptune beſides the ſway
Of every ſalt flood, and each ebbing ſtream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the ſea-girt iles,
That like to rich and various gems inlay
The unadorned boſom of the Deep,
Which he to grace his tributary gods

By courſe commits to ſeveral government,
And gives them leave to wear their ſaphir crowns,
And wield their little tridents: but this ile,
The greateſt and the beſt of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling ſun
A noble peer of mickle truſt and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring nurs'd in princely lore
Are coming to attend their father's ſtate,
And new-intruſted ſcepter; but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whoſe ſhady brows
Threats the forlorn and wand'ring paſſenger;
And here their tender age might ſuffer peril,
But that by quick command from ſovran Jove
I was diſpatch'd for their defenſe and guard;
And liſten why, for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or ſong,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.
  Bacchus, that firſt from out the purple grape
Cruſh'd the ſweet poiſon of miſ-uſed wine,
After the Tuſcan mariners transform'd,
Coaſting the Tyrrhene ſhore, as the winds liſted,
On Circe's iland fell: (Who knows not Circe
The daughter of the Sun? whoſe charmed cup
Whoever taſted, loſt his upright ſhape,

And downward fell into a groveling ſwine)
This nymph that gaz'd upon his cluſtring locks,
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a ſon
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore ſhe brought up, and Comus nam'd,
Who ripe, and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At laſt betakes him to this ominous wood,
And in thick ſhelter of black ſhades imbower'd
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a cryſtal glaſs,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus, which as they taſte,
(For moſt do taſte through fond intemp'rate thirſt)
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
Th' expreſs reſemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into ſome brutiſh form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, ſo perfect is their miſery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boaſt themſelves more comely than before,
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleaſure in a ſenſual ſty.
Therefore when any favor'd of high Jove
Chances to paſs through this adventrous glade,
Swift as the ſparkle of a glancing ſtar

I ſhoot from Heav'n, to give him ſafe convoy,
As now I do: but firſt I muſt put off
Theſe my ſky robes ſpun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeneſs of a ſwain,
That to the ſervice of this houſe belongs,
Who with his ſoft pipe, and ſmooth-dittied ſong,
Well knows to ſtill the wild winds when they roar,
And huſh the waving woods, nor of leſs faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch,
Likelieſt, and neareſt to the preſent aid
Of this occaſion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful ſteps. I muſt be viewleſs now.

COMUS *enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glaſs in the other; with him a rout of monſters, headed like ſundry ſorts of wild beaſts, but otherwiſe like men and women, their apparel gliſtering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noiſe, with torches in their hands.*

COM. The ſtar that bids the ſhepherd fold,
Now the top of Heav'n doth hold,
And the gilded car of Day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the ſteep Atlantic ſtream,
And the ſlope ſun his upward beam
Shoots againſt the duſky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the Eaſt.
Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feaſt,

Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
Tipſy Dance and Jollity.
Braid your locks with roſy twine,
Dropping odors, dropping wine.
Rigor now is gone to bed,
And Advice with ſcrupulous head,
Strict Age, and ſour Severity
With their grave ſaws in ſlumber lie.
We that are of purer fire
Imitate the ſtarry quire,
Who in their nightly watchful ſpheres,
Lead in ſwift round the months and years.
The ſounds and ſeas with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny ſands and ſhelves
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
The wood-nymphs deck'd with daiſies trim,
Their merry wakes and paſtimes keep:
What hath night to do with ſleep?
Night hath better ſweets to prove,
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come let us our rites begin,
'Tis only day-light that makes ſin,
Which theſe dun ſhades will ne'er report.
Hail goddeſs of nocturnal ſport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto, to' whom the ſecret flame
Of mid-night torches burns; myſterious dame,

That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkneſs ſpits her thickeſt gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air,
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'ſt with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vow'd prieſts, till utmoſt end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,
Ere the blabbing eaſtern ſcout,
The nice Morn on the Indian ſteep
From her cabin'd loophole peep,
And to the tell-tale ſun deſcry
Our conceal'd ſolemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantaſtic round.

The Meaſure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
Of ſome chaſte footing near about this ground.
Run to your ſhrouds, within theſe brakes and trees;
Our number may affright: Some virgin ſure
(For ſo I can diſtinguiſh by mine art)
Benighted in theſe woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains; I ſhall ere long
Be well-ſtock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling ſpells into the ſpungy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illuſion,
And give it falſe preſentments, leſt the place
And my quaint habits breed aſtoniſhment,

And put the damsel to suspicious flight,
Which must not be, for that's against my course;
I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well plac'd words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes, I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY *enters.*

This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now; methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
Such as the jocond flute, or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loath
To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet O where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favor of these pines,

Stept, as they ſaid, to the next thicket ſide
To bring me berries, or ſuch cooling fruit
As the kind hoſpitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the grey-hooded Even,
Like a ſad votariſt in palmer's weed,
Roſe from the hindmoſt wheels of Phœbus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labor of my thoughts: 'tis likelieſt
They had engag'd their wand'ring ſteps too far,
And envious Darkneſs, ere they could return,
Had ſtole them from me; elſe O thieviſh Night
Why ſhouldſt thou, but for ſome felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus cloſe up the ſtars,
That Nature hung in Heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
With everlaſting oil, to give due light
To the miſled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may gueſs,
Whence even now the tumult of loud Mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my liſt'ning ear,
Yet nought but ſingle darkneſs do I find.
What might this be? A thouſand fantaſies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling ſhapes, and beck'ning ſhadows dire,
And aery tongues, that ſyllable men's names
On ſands, and ſhores, and deſert wilderneſſes.
Theſe thoughts may ſtartle well, but not aſtound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a ſtrong ſiding champion, Conſcience.—

O welcome pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemiſh'd form of Chaſtity;
I ſee ye viſibly, and now believe
That he, the Supreme Good, to' whom all things ill
Are but as ſlaviſh officers of vengeance,
Would ſend a gliſt'ring guardian if need were
To keep my life and honor unaſſail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a ſable cloud
Turn forth her ſilver lining on the night?
I did not err, there does a ſable cloud
Turn forth her ſilver lining on the night,
And caſts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot hallow to my brothers, but
Such noiſe as I can make to be heard fartheſt
I'll venture, for my new inliven'd ſpirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

SWEET Echo, ſweeteſt nymph, that liv'ſt unſeen
Within thy aery ſhell,
By ſlow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her ſad ſong mourneth well;
Canſt thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likeſt thy Narciſſus are?
O if thou have
Hid them in ſome flow'ry cave,

Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of Parly, daughter of the Sphere,
So may'ſt thou be tranſlated to the ſkies,
And give reſounding grace to all Heav'n's harmonies.
COM. Can any mortal mixture of Earth's mold
Breathe ſuch divine inchanting raviſhment?
Sure ſomething holy lodges in that breaſt,
And with theſe raptures moves the vocal Air
To teſtify his hidden reſidence:
How ſweetly did they flote upon the wings
Of Silence, through the empty vaulted Night,
At every fall ſmoothing the raven down
Of darkneſs till it ſmil'd! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidſt the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades
Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
Who as they ſung, would take the priſon'd ſoul,
And lap it in Elyſium; Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd ſoft applauſe:
Yet they in pleaſing ſlumber lull'd the ſenſe,
And in ſweet madneſs robb'd it of itſelf;
But ſuch a ſacred and home-felt delight,
Such ſober certainty of waking bliſs
I never heard till now. I'll ſpeak to her,
And ſhe ſhall be my queen. Hail foreign wonder,
Whom certain theſe rough ſhades did never breed,
Unleſs the goddeſs that in rural ſhrine

Dwell'ſt here with Pan, or Silvan, by bleſt ſong
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the proſp'rous growth of this tall wood.
LA. Nay gentle Shepherd, ill is loſt that praiſe
That is addreſs'd to unattending ears;
Not any boaſt of ſkill, but extreme ſhift
How to regain my ſever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
To give me anſwer from her moſſy couch.
COM. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?
LA. Dim darkneſs, and this leafy labyrinth.
COM. Could that divide you from near-uſhering guides?
LA. They left me weary on a graſſy turf.
COM. By falſehood, or diſcourteſy, or why?
LA. To ſeek i' th' valley ſome cool friendly ſpring.
COM. And left your fair ſide all unguarded, Lady?
LA. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
COM. Perhaps foreſtalling Night prevented them.
LA. How eaſy my misfortune is to hit!
COM. Imports their loſs, beſide the preſent need?
LA. No leſs than if I ſhould my brothers loſe.
COM. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
LA. As ſmooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
COM. Two ſuch I ſaw, what time the labor'd ox
In his looſe traces from the furrow came,
And the ſwinkt hedger at his ſupper ſat;
I ſaw them under a green mantling vine
That crawls along the ſide of yon ſmall hill,

Plucking ripe cluſters from the tender ſhoots;
Their port was more than human, as they ſtood:
I took it for a faëry viſion
Of ſome gay creatures of the element,
That in the colors of the rainbow live,
And play i' th' plighted clouds. I was awe-ſtruck,
And as I paſs'd I worſhipt; if thoſe you ſeek,
It were a journey like the path to Heav'n,
To help you find them.
LA. Gentle Villager,
What readieſt way would bring me to that place?
COM. Due weſt it riſes from this ſhrubby point.
LA. To find out that, good Shepherd, I ſuppoſe,
In ſuch a ſcant allowance of ſtar light,
Would over taſk the beſt land-pilot's art,
Without the ſure gueſs of well-practis'd feet.
COM. I know each lane and every alley green,
Dingle, or buſhy dell of this wild wood,
And every boſky bourn from ſide to ſide,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your ſtray-attendence be yet lodg'd,
Or ſhroud within theſe limits, I ſhall know
Ere morrow wake or the low-rooſted lark
From her thatcht pallat rouſe; if otherwiſe
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be ſafe
Till further queſt.
LA. Shepherd, I take thy word,

And truſt thy honeſt offer'd courteſy,
Which oft is ſooner found in lowly ſheds
With ſmoky rafters, than in tap'ſtry halls
And courts of princes, where it firſt was nam'd,
And yet is moſt pretended: in a place
Leſs warranted than this, or leſs ſecure,
I cannot be, that I ſhould fear to change it.
Eye me, bleſt Providence, and ſquare my trial
To my proportion'd ſtrength. Shepherd, lead on.

The two BROTHERS.

E. BRO. Unmuffle ye faint Stars, and thou fair Moon,
That wont'ſt to love the traveller's benizon,
Stoop thy pale viſage through an amber cloud,
And diſinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkneſs and of ſhades;
Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
With black uſurping miſts, ſome gentle taper,
Though a ruſh candle from the wicker hole
Of ſome clay habitation, viſit us
With thy long levell'd rule of ſtreaming light,
And thou ſhalt be our ſtar of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynoſure.

Y. BRO. Or if our eyes
Be barr'd that happineſs, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their watled cotes,
Or ſound of paſt'ral reed with oaten ſtops,
Or whiſtle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,

'Twould be ſome ſolace yet, ſome little cheering
In this cloſe dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But O that hapleſs virgin, our loſt ſiſter,
Where may ſhe wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, amongſt rude burs and thiſtles?
Perhaps ſome cold bank is her bolſter now,
Or 'gainſt the rugged bark of ſome broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head fraught with ſad fears.
What if in wild amazement, and affright,
Or, while we ſpeak, within the direful graſp
Of ſavage hunger, or of ſavage heat?
E. BRO. Peace, Brother, be not over-exquiſite
To caſt the faſhion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be ſo, while they reſt unknown,
What need a man foreſtal his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would moſt avoid?
Or if they be but falſe alarms of Fear,
How bitter is ſuch ſelf-deluſion?
I do not think my ſiſter ſo to ſeek,
Or ſo unprincipled in Virtue's book,
And the ſweet peace that Goodneſs boſoms ever,
As that the ſingle want of light and noiſe
(Not being in danger, as I truſt ſhe is not)
Could ſtir the conſtant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into miſbecoming plight.
Virtue could ſee to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though ſun and moon
Were in the flat ſea ſunk. And Wiſdom's ſelf

Oft feeks to fweet retired folitude,
Where with her beft nurfe Contemplation
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various buftle of refort
Were all too ruffled, and fometimes impair'd.
He that has light within his own clear breaft
May fit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark foul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day fun;
Himfelf is his own dungeon.
Y. BRO. 'Tis moft true,
That mufing Meditation moft affects
The penfive fecrecy of defert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And fits as fafe as in a fenate houfe;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple difh,
Or do his grey hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hefperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch with uninchanted eye,
To fave her bloffoms, and defend her fruit
From the rafh hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well fpread out the unfunn'd heaps
Of mifers' treafure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is fafe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a fingle helplefs maiden pafs

Uninjur'd in this wild ſurrounding waſte.
Of night, or lonelineſs it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Leſt ſome ill-greeting touch attempt the perſon
Of our unowned ſiſter.

E. BRO. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my ſiſter's ſtate
Secure without all doubt or controverſy:
Yet where an equal poiſe of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly baniſh ſquint Suſpicion.
My ſiſter is not ſo defenſeleſs left
As you imagin; ſhe' has a hidden ſtrength
Which you remember not.

Y. BRO. What hidden ſtrength,
Unleſs the ſtrength of Heav'n, if you mean that?

E. BRO. I mean that too, but yet a hidden ſtrength,
Which if Heav'n gave it may be term'd her own:
'Tis Chaſtity, my brother, Chaſtity:
She that has that is clad in cómplete ſteel,
And like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge foreſts, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and ſandy perilous wilds,
Where through the ſacred rays of Chaſtity,
No ſavage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer
Will dare to ſoil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very Deſolation dwells

By grots, and caverns ſhagg'd with horrid ſhades,
She may paſs on with unblench'd majeſty,
Be it not done in pride, or in preſumption.
Some ſay no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog, or fire, by lake, or mooriſh fen,
Blue meager hag, or ſtubborn unlaid ghoſt,
That breaks his magic chains at curfeu time,
No goblin, or ſwart faery of the mine
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or ſhall I call
Antiquity from the old ſchools of Greece
To teſtify the arms of Chaſtity?
Hence had the huntreſs Dian her dread bow,
Fair ſilver-ſhafted queen, for ever chaſte,
Wherewith ſhe tam'd the brinded lioneſs
And ſpotted mountain pard, but ſet at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Fear'd her ſtern frown, and ſhe was Queen o'th' Woods.
What was that ſnaky-headed Gorgon ſhield,
That wiſe Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith ſhe freez'd her foes to congeal'd ſtone,
But rigid looks of chaſte auſterity,
And noble grace that daſh'd brute violence
With ſudden adoration, and blank awe?
So dear to Heav'n is ſaintly Chaſtity,
That when a ſoul is found ſincerely ſo,
A thouſand liveried angels lacky her,
Driving far off each thing of ſin and guilt,

And in clear dream, and ſolemn viſion,
Tell her of things that no groſs ear can hear,
Till oft converſe with heav'nly habitants
Begin to caſt a beam on th' outward ſhape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the ſoul's eſſence,
Till all be made immortal: but when Luſt,
By unchaſte looks, looſe geſtures, and foul talk,
But moſt by leud and laviſh act of ſin,
Lets in Defilement to the inward parts,
The ſoul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till ſhe quite loſe
The divine property of her firſt being.
Such are thoſe thick and gloomy ſhadows damp
Oft ſeen in charnal vaults, and ſepulchers,
Lingring, and ſitting by a new-made grave,
As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itſelf by carnal ſenſuality
To a degenerate and degraded ſtate.

Y. BRO. How charming is divine philoſophy!
Not harſh, and crabbed, as dull fools ſuppoſe,
But muſical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feaſt of nectar'd ſweets,
Where no crude ſurfeit reigns.

E. BRO. Liſt, liſt, I hear
Some far off hallow break the ſilent air.

Y. BRO. Methought ſo too; what ſhould it be?

E. BRO. For certain

Either ſome one like us night-founder'd here,
Or elſe ſome neighbour wood-man, or, at worſt,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
Y. BRO. Heav'n keep my ſiſter. Again, again, and
Beſt draw, and ſtand upon our guard. [near ;
E. BRO. I'll hallow ;
If he be friendly, he comes well ; if not,
Defenſe is a good cauſe, and Heav'n be for us.

The attendent SPIRIT, *habited like a ſhepherd.*

That hallow I ſhould know, what are you ? ſpeak ;
Come not too near, you fall on iron ſtakes elſe.
SPI. What voice is that ? my young Lord ? ſpeak again.
Y. BRO. O Brother, 'tis my father's ſhepherd, ſure.
E. BRO. Thyrſis ? whoſe artful ſtrains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And ſweeten'd every muſkroſe of the dale.
How cam'ſt thou here, good Swain ? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid loſt his dam,
Or ſtraggling weather the pent flock forſook ?
How could'ſt thou find this dark ſequeſter'd nook ?
SPI. O my lov'd maſter's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on ſuch a trivial toy
As a ſtray'd ewe, or to purſue the ſtealth
Of pilfering wolf ; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich theſe downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is ſhe ?
How chance ſhe is not in your company ?

E. BRO. To tell thee fadly, Shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we loft her as we came.
SPI. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.
E. BRO. What fears, good Thyrfis? Prethee briefly [fhew.
SPI. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
(Though fo efteem'd by fhallow ignorance)
What the fage poets, taught by th' heav'nly Mufe,
Story'd of old in high immortal verfe,
Of dire Chimeras and inchanted iles,
And rifted rocks whofe entrance leads to Hell;
For fuch there be, but Unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cyprefs fhades a forcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep fkill'd in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirfty wanderer
By fly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whofe pleafing poifon
The vifage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likenefs of a beaft
Fixes inftead, unmolding Reafon's mintage
Charácter'd in the face; this have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade, whence night by night
He and his monftrous rout are heard to howl
Like ftabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obfcured haunts of inmoft bowers.

Yet have they many baits, and guileful ſpells,
To' inveigle and invite th' unwary ſenſe
Of them that paſs unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by them the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their ſupper on the ſavory herb
Of knot-graſs dew-beſprent, and were in fold,
I ſat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-ſuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleaſing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minſtrelſy,
Till Fancy had her fill, but ere a cloſe
The wonted roar was up amidſt the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous diſſonance;
At which I ceas'd, and liſten'd them a while,
Till an unuſual ſtop of ſudden ſilence
Gave reſpit to the drouſy flighted ſteeds,
That draw the litter of cloſe-curtain'd Sleep;
At laſt a ſoft and ſolemn breathing ſound
Roſe like a ſteam of rich diſtill'd perfumes,
And ſtole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere ſhe was ware, and wiſh'd ſhe might
Deny her nature, and be never more
Still to be ſo diſplac'd. I was all ear,
And took in ſtrains that might create a ſoul
Under the ribs of death: but O ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my moſt honor'd Lady, your dear ſiſter.

Amaz'd I ſtood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And O poor hapleſs nightingale thought I,
How ſweet thou ſing'ſt, how near the deadly ſnare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haſte,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till guided by mine ear I found the place
Where that damn'd wiſard hid in ſly diſguiſe
(For ſo by certain ſigns I knew) had met
Already, ere my beſt ſpeed could prevent,
The aidleſs innocent Lady his wiſh'd prey,
Who gently aſk'd if he had ſeen ſuch two,
Suppoſing him ſome neighbour villager.
Longer I durſt not ſtay, but ſoon I gueſs'd
Ye were the two ſhe meant; with that I ſprung
Into ſwift flight, till I had found you here,
But further know I not.
Y. BRO. O Night and Shades,
How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot,
Againſt th' unarmed weakneſs of one virgin
Alone, and helpleſs! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?
E. BRO. Yes, and keep it ſtill,
Lean on it ſafely; not a period
Shall be unſaid for me: againſt the threats
Of Malice or of Sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
Virtue may be aſſail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjuſt force, but not inthrall'd;
Yea even that which Miſchief meant moſt harm,

Shall in the happy trial prove moſt glory:
But evil on itſelf ſhall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodneſs, when at laſt
Gather'd like ſcum, and ſettled to itſelf,
It ſhall be in eternal reſtleſs change
Self-fed, and ſelf-conſumed: if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenneſs,
And earth's baſe built on ſtubble. But come let's on.
Againſt th' oppoſing will and arm of Heav'n
May never this juſt ſword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd Magician, let him be girt
With all the griſly legions that troop
Under the ſooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monſtrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to reſtore his purchaſe back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.

SPI. Alas! good ventrous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold empriſe;
But here thy ſword can do thee little ſtead;
Far other arms, and other weapons muſt
Be thoſe that quell the might of helliſh charms:
He with his bare wand can unthred thy joints,
And crumble all thy ſinews.

E. BRO. Why prethee, Shepherd,
How durſt thou then thyſelf approach ſo near,
As to make this relation?

SPI. Care and utmoſt ſhifts

How to ſecure the Lady from ſurpriſal,
Brought to my mind a certain ſhepherd lad,
Of ſmall regard to ſee to, yet well ſkill'd
In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
That ſpreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me ſing,
Which when I did, he on the tender graſs
Would ſit, and hearken ev'n to extaſy,
And in requital ope his leathern ſcrip,
And ſhow me ſimples of a thouſand names,
Telling their ſtrange and vigorous faculties:
Amongſt the reſt a ſmall unſightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
The leaf was darkiſh, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he ſaid,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this ſoil:
Unknown, and like eſteem'd, and the dull ſwain
Treads on it daily with his clouted ſhoon;
And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly
That Hermes once to wiſe Ulyſſes gave;
He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of ſovran uſe
'Gainſt all inchantments, mildew, blaſt, or damp,
Or ghaſtly furies' apparition.
I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
Till now that this extremity compell'd:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul inchanter though diſguis'd,
Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his ſpells,

And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly aſſault the Necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntleſs hardihood,
And brandiſh'd blade ruſh on him, break his glaſs,
And ſhed the luſcious liquor on the ground,
But ſeiſe his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce ſign of battel make, and menace high,
Or like the ſons of Vulcan vomit ſmoke,
Yet will they ſoon retire, if he but ſhrink.
E. BRO. Thyrſis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee,
And ſome good angel bear a ſhield before us.

The ſcene changes to a ſtately palace, ſet out with all manner of deliciouſneſs: ſoft muſic, tables ſpread with all dainties. COMUS *appears with his rabble, and the* LADY *ſet in an inchanted chair, to whom he offers his glaſs, which ſhe puts by, and goes about to riſe.*

COM. Nay, Lady, ſit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaſter,
And you a ſtatue, or as Daphne was
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.
LA. Fool, do not boaſt,
Thou canſt not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms although this corporal rind
Thou haſt immanacl'd, while Heav'n ſees good.
COM. Why are you vext, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from theſe gates
Sorrow flies far: ſee here be all the pleaſures

That Fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spi'rits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd,
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which Nature lent
For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal like an ill borrower
With that which you receiv'd on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.
LA. 'Twill not, false traitor,
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
Thou toldst me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brew'd inchantments, foul deceiver;

Haſt thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With viſor'd falſhood, and baſe forgery?
And would'ſt thou ſeek again to trap me here
With liquoriſh baits fit to inſnare a brute?
Were it a draft for Juno when ſhe banquets,
I would not taſte thy treaſonous offer; none
But ſuch as are good men can give good things,
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wiſe appetite.
COM. O fooliſhneſs of men! that lend their ears
To thoſe budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praiſing the lean and ſallow Abſtinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With ſuch a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the ſeas with ſpawn innumerable,
But all to pleaſe, and ſate the curious taſte?
And ſet to work millions of ſpinning worms,
That in their green ſhops weave the ſmooth-hair'd ſilk
To deck her ſons, and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutcht th' all-worſhipt ore, and precious gems
To ſtore her children with: if all the world
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulſe,
Drink the clear ſtream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be' unthank'd, would be un-
Not half his riches known, and yet deſpis'd, [prais'd,

And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility,
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air darkt with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the Deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List Lady, be not coy, and be not cosen'd
With that same vaunted name Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be horded,
But must be current, and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavory in th' enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose,
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, in feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions
And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,

Love-darting eyes, or treſſes like the Morn?
There was another meaning in theſe gifts,
Think what, and be adviſ'd, you are but young yet.
LA. I had not thought to have unlockt my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this jugler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding falſe rules prankt in Reaſon's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments,
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impoſtor, do not charge moſt innocent Nature,
As if ſhe would her children ſhould be riotous
With her abundance; ſhe good cateref̶s
Means her proviſion only to the good,
That live according to her ſober laws,
And holy dictate of ſpare Temperance:
If every juſt man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beſeeming ſhare
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
Now heaps upon ſome few with vaſt exceſs,
Nature's full bleſſings would be well diſpens'd
In unſuperfluous even proportion,
And ſhe no whit incumber'd with her ſtore,
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praiſe due paid; for ſwiniſh Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidſt his gorgeous feaſt,
But with beſotted baſe ingratitude
Crams, and blaſphemes his feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I ſaid enough? To him that dares

Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Againſt the ſun-clad power of Chaſtity,
Fain would I ſomething ſay, yet to what end?
Thou haſt nor ear nor ſoul to apprehend
The ſublime notion, and high myſtery
That muſt be utter'd to unfold the ſage
And ſerious doctrin of Virginity,
And thou art worthy that thou ſhouldſt not know
More happineſs than this thy preſent lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath ſo well been taught her dazzling fence,
Thou art not fit to hear thyſelf convinc'd;
Yet ſhould I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cauſe would kindle my rapt ſpirits
To ſuch a flame of ſacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to ſympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and ſhake,
Till all thy magic ſtructures rear'd ſo high,
Were ſhatter'd into heaps o'er thy falſe head.
COM. She fables not, I feel that I do fear
Her words ſet off by ſome ſuperior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold ſhudd'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus
To ſome of Saturn's crew. I muſt diſſemble
And try her yet more ſtrongly. Come, no more,
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Againſt the canon laws of our foundation;
I muſt not ſuffer this, yet 'tis but the lees

And ſettlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all ſtrait, one ſip of this
Will bathe the drooping ſpirits in delight
Beyond the bliſs of dreams. Be wiſe, and taſte.—

[The BROTHERS *ruſh in with ſwords drawn, wreſt his glaſs out of his hand, and break it againſt the ground; his rout make ſign of reſiſtance, but are all driven in: the attendent* SPIRIT *comes in.*

SPI. What, have you let the falſe inchanter ſcape?
O ye miſtook, ye ſhould have ſnatcht his wand
And bound him faſt; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of diſſevering power,
We cannot free the lady that ſits here
In ſtony fetters fix'd, and motionleſs:
Yet ſtay, be not diſturb'd; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The ſootheſt ſhepherd that ere pip'd on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moiſt curb ſways the ſmooth Severn ſtream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilome ſhe was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the ſcepter from his father Brute.
She guiltleſs damſel fly'ing the mad purſuit
Of her enraged ſtepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That ſtay'd her flight with his croſs-flowing courſe.
The water-nymphs that in the bottom play'd,

Held up their pearled wriſts and took her in,
Bearing her ſtrait to aged Nereus' hall,
Who piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers ſtrow'd with aſphodil,
And through the porch and inlet of each ſenſe
Dropt in ambroſial oils till ſhe reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddeſs of the river; ſtill ſhe retains
Her maiden gentleneſs, and oft at eve
Viſits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blaſts, and ill-luck ſigns
That the ſhrewd medling elfe delights to make,
Which ſhe with precious vial'd liquors heals;
For which the ſhepherds at their feſtivals
Carol her goodneſs loud in ruſtic lays,
And throw ſweet garlands' wreaths into her ſtream
Of pancies, pinks, and gaudy daffadils.
And, as the old ſwain ſaid, ſhe can unlock
The claſping charm, and thaw the numming ſpell,
If ſhe be right invok'd in warbled ſong,
For maidenhood ſhe loves, and will be ſwift
To aid a virgin, ſuch as was herſelf,
In hard-beſetting need; this will I try,
And add the power of ſome adjuring verſe.

SONG.

SABRINA fair,
Liſten where thou art ſitting
Under the glaſſy, cool, tranſlucent wave,

In twisted braids of lillies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear Honor's sake,
Goddess of the Silver lake.
Listen and save.
Listen and appear to us
In name of great Oceanus,
By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wisard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks,
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen and save.

SABRINA *rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agat, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emrald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle Swain, at thy request
I am here.

SPI. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distrest,
Through the force, and through the wile
Of unblest inchanter vile.

SAB. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help insnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure,
Thrice upon thy fingers' tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip;
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutenous heat,

I touch with chaſte palms moiſt and cold:
Now the ſpell hath loſt his hold;
And I muſt haſte ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA *deſcends, and the* LADY *riſes out of her ſeat.*

SPI. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchiſes' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miſs
From a thouſand petty rills,
That tumble down the ſnowy hills:
Summer drouth, or ſinged air
Never ſcorch thy treſſes fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten cryſtal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll aſhore
The beryl, and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tower and terras round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrhe, and cinnamon.
Come, Lady, while Heav'n lends us grace,
Let us fly this curſed place,
Leſt the Sorcerer us entice
With ſome other new device.
Not a waſte or needleſs ſound,
Till we come to holier ground;
I ſhall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,

And not many furlongs thence
Is your father's reſidence,
Where this night are met in ſtate
Many a friend to gratulate
His wiſh'd preſence, and beſide
All the ſwains that near abide,
With jigs and rural dance reſort;
We ſhall catch them at their ſport,
And our ſudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer;
Come let us haſte, the ſtars grow high,
But Night ſits monarch yet in the mid ſky.

The ſcene changes, preſenting Ludlow town and the preſident's caſtle; then come in country dancers, after them the attendent SPIRIT, *with the two* BROTHERS *and the* LADY.

SONG.

SPI. BACK, Shepherds, back, enough your play,
Till next ſun-ſhine holiday;
Here be without duck or nod
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and ſuch court guiſe
As Mercury did firſt deviſe
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This ſecond Song preſents them to their father and mother.

NOBLE Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought you new delight,
Here behold ſo goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;

Heav'n hath timely try'd their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And ſent them here through hard aſſays
With a crown of deathleſs praiſe,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er ſenſual folly, and intemperance.

The dances ended, the SPIRIT *epiloguizes.*

SPI. To the ocean now I fly,
And thoſe happy climes that lie
Where Day never ſhuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the ſky:
There I ſuck the liquid air
All amidſt the gardens fair
Of Heſperus, and his daughters three
That ſing about the golden tree:
Along the criſped ſhades and bowers
Revels the ſpruce and jocund Spring,
The Graces, and the roſy-boſom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring;
That there eternal Summer dwells,
And weſt-winds with muſky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and caſſia's balmy ſmells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled ſcarf can ſhew,
And drenches with Elyſian dew
(Liſt mortals, if your ears be true)

Beds of hyacinth and roſes,
Where young Adonis oft repoſes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In ſlumber ſoft, and on the ground
Sadly ſits th'Aſſyrian queen;
But far above in ſpangled ſheen
Celeſtial Cupid her fam'd ſon advanc'd,
Holds his dear Pſyche ſweet intranc'd,
After her wand'ring labors long,
Till free conſent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unſpotted ſide
Two bliſsful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; ſo Jove hath ſworn.
But now my taſk is ſmoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin ſlow doth bend,
And from thence can ſoar as ſoon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue, ſhe alone is free,
She can teach ye how to clime
Higher than the ſphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n itſelf would ſtoop to her.

The End of Comus.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE loathed Melancholy,
  Of Cerberus and blackeſt Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn   [holy,
  'Mongſt horrid ſhapes, and ſhrieks, and ſights un-
Find out ſome uncouth cell,
  Where brooding Darkneſs ſpreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven ſings;
  There under ebon ſhades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
  In dark Cimmerian deſert ever dwell.
But come thou goddeſs fair and free,
In Heav'n ycleap'd Euphroſyne,
And by men heart-eaſing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
With two ſiſter Graces more
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as ſome ſager ſing)
The frolic wind that breathes the ſpring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying,
There on beds of violets blue,
And freſh-blown roſes waſh'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haſte thee Nymph, and bring with thee
Jeſt and youthful Jollity,

Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
Nods and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple ſleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his ſides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantaſtic toe,
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain nymph, ſweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honor due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleaſures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And ſinging ſtartle the dull Night,
From his watch-tower in the ſkies,
Till the dappled Dawn doth riſe;
Then to come in ſpite of Sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the ſweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twiſted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of Darkneſs thin,
And to the ſtack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly ſtruts his dames before:
Oft liſt'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouſe the ſlumb'ring Morn,

From the ſide of ſome hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing ſhrill:
Some time walking not unſeen
By hedge-row elms, on hillocs green,
Right againſt the eaſtern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his ſtate,
Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thouſand liveries dight,
While the plow-man near at hand
Whiſtles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid ſingeth blithe,
And the mower whets his ſithe,
And every ſhepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Strait mine eye hath caught new pleaſures
Whilſt the landſkip round it meaſures,
Ruſſet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do ſtray,
Mountains on whoſe barren breaſt
The lab'ring clouds do often reſt,
Meadows trim with daiſies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers and battlements it ſees
Boſom'd high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps ſome beauty lies,
The cynoſure of neighb'ring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney ſmokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,

Where Corydon and Thyrſis met,
Are at their ſavory dinner ſet
Of herbs, and other country meſſes,
Which the neat-handed Phyllis dreſſes;
And then in haſte her bower ſhe leaves,
With Theſtylis to bind the ſheaves;
Or if the earlier ſeaſon lead
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with ſecure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocond rebecs ſound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd ſhade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a ſunſhine holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail;
Then to the ſpicy nut-brown ale,
With ſtories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets ate,
She was pincht and pull'd, ſhe ſaid,
And he by frier's lanthorn led
Tells how the drudging goblin ſwet,
To earn his cream-bowl duly ſet,
When in one night, ere glimpſe of morn,
His ſhadowy flale hath threſh'd the corn
That ten day-lab'rers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,

And ſtretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Baſks at the fire his hairy ſtrength,
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the firſt cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whiſp'ring winds ſoon lull'd aſleep.
Towered cities pleaſe us then,
And the buſy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold
In weeds of Peace high triumphs hold,
With ſtore of ladies, whoſe bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear
In ſaffron robe, with taper clear,
And Pomp, and Feaſt, and Revelry,
With Maſk and antique Pageantry,
Such ſights as youthful poets dream,
On ſummer eves by haunted ſtream.
Then to the well-trod ſtage anon,
If Johnſon's learned ſock be on,
Or ſweeteſt Shakeſpeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever againſt eating cares,
Lap me in ſoft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal Verſe,
Such as the meeting ſoul may pierce

In notes, with many a winding bout
Of link'd ſweetneſs long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwiſting all the chains that ty
The hidden ſoul of Harmony;
That Orpheus' ſelf may heave his head
From golden ſlumber on a bed
Of heapt Elyſian flowers, and hear
Such ſtrains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite ſet free
His half regain'd Eurydice.
Theſe delights if thou canſt give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred,
How little you beſted,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys?
Dwell in ſome idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy ſhapes poſſeſs,
As thick and numberleſs
As the gay motes that people the ſun-beams,
Or likelieſt hovering dreams
The fickle penſioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail thou goddeſs, ſage and holy,
Hail divineſt Melancholy,
Whoſe ſaintly viſage is too bright
To hit the ſenſe of human ſight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, ſtaid Wiſdom's hue;
Black, but ſuch as in eſteem
Prince Memnon's ſiſter might beſeem,
Or that ſtarr'd Ethiop queen that ſtrove
To ſet her beauties' praiſe above
The ſea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far deſcended,
Thee bright-hair'd Veſta long of yore
To ſolitary Saturn bore;
His daughter ſhe (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a ſtain)

Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in ſecret ſhades
Of woody Ida's inmoſt grove,
While yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come penſive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, ſtedfaſt, and demure,
All in a robe of darkeſt grain,
Flowing with majeſtic train,
And ſable ſtole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent ſhoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted ſtate,
With even ſtep, and muſing gate,
And looks commercing with the ſkies,
Thy rapt ſoul ſitting in thine eyes:
There held in holy paſſion ſtill,
Forget thyſelf to marble, till
With a ſad leaden downward caſt
Thou fix them on the earth as faſt:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Faſt, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muſes in a ring
Ay round about Jove's altar ſing:
And add to theſe retired Leiſure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleaſure;
But firſt, and chiefeſt, with thee bring
Him that yon ſoars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation;

And the mute Silence hiſt along,
'Leſs Philomel will deign a ſong,
In her ſweeteſt, ſaddeſt plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
Gently o'er th' accuſtom'd oak;
Sweet bird that ſhunn'ſt the noiſe of folly,
Moſt muſical, moſt melancholy!
Thee chauntreſs oft the woods among
I woo to hear thy even-ſong;
And miſſing thee, I walk unſeen
On the dry ſmooth-ſhaven green,
To behold the wand'ring moon,
Riding near her higheſt noon,
Like one that had been led aſtray
Through the Heav'n's wide pathleſs way,
And oft, as if her head ſhe bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a plat of riſing ground,
I hear the far-off curfeu ſound,
Over ſome wide-water'd ſhore,
Swinging ſlow with ſullen roar;
Or if the air will not permit,
Some ſtill removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach Light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all reſort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,

Or the belman's droufy charm,
To blefs the doors from nightly harm:
Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be feen in fome high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice great Hermes, or unfphere
The fpirit of Plato to unfold
What worlds, or what vaft regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forfook
Her manfion in this flefhly nook:
And of thofe demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whofe power hath a true confent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In fcepter'd pall come fweeping by,
Prefenting Thebe's or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine,
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the bufkin'd ftage.
But, O fad Virgin, that thy power
Might raife Mufæus from his bower,
Or bid the foul of Orpheus fing
Such notes as warbled to the ftring,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did feek.
Or call up him that left half told
The ftory of Cambufcan bold,

Of Camball, and of Algarſife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glaſs,
And of the wondrous horſe of braſs,
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if ought elſe great bards beſide
In ſage and ſolemn tunes have ſung,
Of turneys and of trophies hung,
Of foreſts, and inchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus Night oft ſee me in thy pale carreer
Till civil-ſuited Morn appear,
Not trickt and frounct as ſhe was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or uſher'd with a ſhower ſtill,
When the guſt hath blown his fill,
Ending on the ruſsling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And when the ſun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me goddeſs bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And ſhadows brown that Sylvan loves
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heaved ſtroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt,

There in clofe covert by fome brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from Day's garifh eye,
While the bee with honied thie,
That at her flowery work doth fing,
And the waters murmuring,
With fuch confort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd fleep;
And let fome ftrange myfterious dream
Wave at his wings in aery ftream
Of lively portraiture difplay'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid.
And as I wake, fweet mufic breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by fome fpirit to mortals good,
Or th' unfeen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the ftudious cloyfters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antic pillars maffy proof,
And ftoried windows richly dight,
Cafting a dim religious light.
There let the pealing organ blow
To the full voic'd quire below,
In fervice high, and anthems clear,
As may with fweetnefs, through mine ear,
Diffolve me into extafies,
And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.

And may at laſt my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and moſſy cell,
Where I may ſit and rightly ſpell
Of every ſtar that Heav'n doth ſhew,
And every herb that ſips the dew;
Till old Experience do attain
To ſomething like prophetic ſtrain.
Theſe pleaſures Melancholy give,
And I with thee will chuſe to live.

ARCADES.

Part of an Entertainment preſented to the Counteſs Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by ſome noble perſons of her family, who appear on the ſcene in paſtoral habit, moving toward the ſeat of ſtate, with this ſong.

I. SONG.

Look Nymphs, and Shepherds look,
What ſudden blaze of majeſty
Is that which we from hence deſcry,
Too divine to be miſtook!
This, this is ſhe
To whom our vows and wiſhes bend;
Here our ſolemn ſearch hath end.
Fame, that her high worth to raiſe,
Seem'd erſt ſo laviſh and profuſe,
We may juſtly now accuſe
Of detraction from her praiſe;
Leſs than half we find expreſt,
Envy bid conceal the reſt.
Mark what radiant ſtate ſhe ſpreads,
In circle round her ſhining throne,
Shooting her beams like ſilver threads;
This, this is ſhe alone,
Sitting like a goddeſs bright,
In the center of her light.
Might ſhe the wiſe Latona be,
Or the towered Cybele,

Mother of a hundred gods;
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallel'd?

As they come forward, the GENIUS *of the wood appears, and turning toward them, speaks.*

GEN. Stay gentle Swains, for though in this disguise,
I see bright honor sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluce
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs as great and good,
I know this quest of yours, and free intent
Was all in honor and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,
And with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft amidst these shades alone
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know by lot from Jove I am the power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,

To nurſe the ſaplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint and wanton windings wove,
And all my plants I ſave from nightly ill
Of noiſome winds, and blaſting vapors chill:
And from the boughs bruſh off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the croſs dire-looking planet ſmites,
Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
When Ev'ning gray doth riſe, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground,
And early ere the odorous breath of Morn
Awakes the ſlumb'ring leaves, or taſſel'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haſte I all about,
Number my ranks, and viſit every ſprout
With puiſſant words, and murmurs made to bleſs;
But elſe in deep of night, when drowſineſs
Hath lock'd up mortal ſenſe, then liſten I
To the celeſtial Sirens' harmony,
That ſit upon the nine infolded ſpheres,
And ſing to thoſe that hold the vital ſhears,
And turn the adamantin ſpindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
Such ſweet compulſion doth in muſic lie,
To lull the daughters of Neceſſity,
And keep unſteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in meaſur'd motion draw
After the heav'nly tune, which none can hear
Of human mold with groſs unpurged ear;

And yet ſuch muſic worthieſt were to blaze
The peerleſs highth of her immortal praiſe,
Whoſe luſtre leads us, and for her moſt fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable ſounds, yet as we go,
Whate'er the ſkill of leſſer gods can ſhow,
I will aſſay, her worth to celebrate
And ſo attend ye toward her glittering ſtate;
Where ye may all that are of noble ſtem
Approach and kiſs her ſacred veſture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'ER the ſmooth enamel'd green,
Where no print of ſtep hath been,
Follow me as I ſing,
And touch the warbled ſtring,
Under the ſhady roof
Of branching elm ſtar-proof.
Follow me,
I will bring you where ſhe ſits,
Clad in ſplendor as beſits
Her deity.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not ſeen.

III. SONG.

NYMPHS and Shepherds dance no more
By ſandy Ladon's lillied banks,
On old Lycæus or Cyllene hoar
Trip no more in twilight ranks,
Though Erymanth your loſs deplore,
A better ſoil ſhall give ye thanks.
From the ſtony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us,
Here ye ſhall have greater grace,
To ſerve the Lady of this place.
Though Syrinx your Pan's miſtreſs were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not ſeen.

LYCIDAS.

In this monody the Author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drown'd in his paſſage from Cheſter, on the Iriſh ſeas, 1637, *and by occaſion foretels the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their highth.*

YET once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never ſere,
I come to pluck your berries harſh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter conſtraint, and ſad occaſion dear,
Compels me to diſturb your ſeaſon due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not ſing for Lycidas? he knew
Himſelf to ſing, and build the lofty rhime.
He muſt not flote upon his watry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of ſome melodious tear.
   Begin then, Siſters of the Sacred Well,
That from beneath the ſeat of Jove doth ſpring,
Begin, and ſomewhat loudly ſweep the ſtring.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuſe,
So may ſome gentle Muſe
With lucky words favor my deſtin'd urn,
And as he paſſes turn,

And bid fair peace be to my ſable ſhroud:
For we were nurſt upon the ſelf-ſame hill,
Fed the ſame flock by fountain, ſhade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the Morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray fly winds her ſultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the freſh dews of night
Oft till the ſtar that roſe at evening bright,
Tow'ards Heav'n's deſcent had ſlop'd his weſt'ring wheel.
Mean while the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th' oaten flute,
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad ſound would not be abſent long,
And old Damætas lov'd to hear our ſong.
But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never muſt return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and deſert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The willows, and the hazel copſes green,
Shall now no more be ſeen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy ſoft lays.
As killing as the canker to the roſe,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or froſt to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When firſt the white thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loſs to ſhepherds' ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorſeleſs
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas? [deep
For neither were ye playing on the ſteep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the ſhaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva ſpreads her wiſard ſtream:
Ay me! I fondly dream
Had ye been there, for what could that have done?
What could the Muſe herſelf that Orpheus bore,
The Muſe herſelf for her inchanting ſon,
Whom univerſal Nature did lament,
When by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His goary viſage down the ſtream was ſent,
Down the ſwift Hebrus to the Leſbian ſhore?
Alas! what boots it with inceſſant care
To tend the homely ſlighted ſhepherd's trade,
And ſtrictly meditate the thankleſs Muſe?
Were it not better done as others uſe,
To ſport with Amaryllis in the ſhade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the ſpur that the clear ſpi'rit doth raiſe
(That laſt infirmity of noble mind)
To ſcorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burſt out into ſudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred ſhears,
And ſlits the thin ſpun life. But not the praiſe,
Phœbus reply'd, and touch'd my trembling ears;

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal foil
Nor in the glift'ring foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad Rumor lies,
But lives and fpreads aloft by thofe pure eyes,
And perfect witnefs of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces laftly on each deed,
Of fo much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.
O fountain Arethufe, and thou honor'd flood,
Smooth-fliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That ftrain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And liftens to the herald of the fea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He afk'd the Waves, and afk'd the fellon Winds,
What hard mifhap hath doom'd this gentle fwain?
And queftion'd every guft of rugged winds
That blows from off each beaked promontory;
They knew not of his ftory,
And fage Hippotades their anfwer brings,
That not a blaft was from his dungeon ftray'd,
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her fifters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark
Built in th' eclipfe, and rigg'd with curfes dark,
That funk fo low that facred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend fire, went footing flow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet fedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that fanguin flower infcrib'd with woe.

Ah! who hath reſt (quoth he) my deareſt pledge?
Laſt came, and laſt did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake,
Two maſſy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron ſhuts amain)
He ſhook his miter'd locks, and ſtern beſpake,
How well could I have ſpar'd for thee, young Swain,
Enow of ſuch as for their bellies' ſake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reck'ning make,
Than how to ſcramble at the ſhearers' feaſt,
And ſhove away the worthy bidden gueſt; [hold
Blind mouths! that ſcarce themſelves know how to
A ſheep-hook, or have learn'd ought elſe the leaſt
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? what need they? they are ſped;
And when they liſt, their lean and flaſhy ſongs
Grate on their ſcrannel pipes of wretched ſtraw;
The hungry ſheep look up, and are not fed,
But ſwoll'n with wind, and the rank miſt they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion ſpread:
Beſides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace; and nothing ſaid,
But that two-handed engin at the door
Stands ready to ſmite once, and ſmite no more.
Return Alpheus, the dread voice is paſt
That ſhrunk thy ſtreams; return Sicilian Muſe,
And call the vales, and bid them hither caſt

Their bells, and flourets of a thouſand hues.
Ye Valleys low, where the mild whiſpers uſe
Of ſhades, and wanton winds, and guſhing brooks,
On whoſe freſh lap the ſwart ſtar ſparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes,
That on the green turf ſuck the honied ſhowers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primroſe that forſaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jeſſamine,
The white pink, and the panſy fret with jet,
The glowing violet,
The muſk-roſe, and the well attir'd woodbine,
With cowſlips wan that hang the penſive head,
And every flower that ſad embrodery wears:
Bid amarantus all his beauty ſhed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To ſtrow the laureat herſe where Lycid lies.
For ſo to interpoſe a little eaſe,
Let our frail thoughts dally with falſe ſurmiſe.
Ay me! whilſt thee the ſhores and ſounding ſeas
Waſh far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the ſtormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Viſit'ſt the bottom of the monſtrous world;
Or whether thou to our moiſt vows deny'd,
Sleep'ſt by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great viſion of the guarded mount
Looks tow'ard Namancos and Bayona's hold;

Look homeward angel now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye Dolphins, waft the hapleſs youth.
  Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your ſorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor;
So ſinks the day-ſtar in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new ſpangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning ſky:
So Lycidas ſunk low, but mounted high,
Thro' the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,
Where other groves and other ſtreams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpreſſive nuptial ſong,
In the bleſt kingdoms meek of Joy and Love.
There entertain him all the ſaints above,
In ſolemn troops and ſweet ſocieties,
That ſing, and ſinging in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the ſhepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the ſhore,
In thy large recompenſe, and ſhalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
  Thus ſang the uncouth ſwain to th' oaks and rills,
While the ſtill Morn went out with ſandals gray;
He touch'd the tender ſtops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;

And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

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END OF VOLUME THIRD.